

JENIFFER MOHAMMED

CARIBBEAN STUDIES **FOR CAPE® EXAMINATIONS**

Second Edition





Caribbean Studies for CAPE® Examinations

An Interdisciplinary Approach

2nd Edition

JENIFFER MOHAMMED

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Preface

The second edition of the text *Caribbean Studies: An Interdisciplinary Approach* has been rewritten to include new syllabus material, to deepen the interdisciplinary nature of the subject and to respond to comments made by teachers. Caribbean Studies belongs to that genre of study known as Area Studies; other examples are Latin American Studies, Egyptology and Brazilian Studies. An interdisciplinary study weaves together research and scholarship from different academic disciplines, all of which are relevant to understanding more about the particular area or region. Much of the content is derived from the Social Sciences and the Humanities and includes history, geography, sociology, political science, languages, literature and cultural studies.

Since most teachers have been trained in well-defined disciplines, the interdisciplinary nature of Caribbean Studies may pose a challenge in delivering the curriculum. It is indeed remarkable that such a subject should find its way into post-secondary education, which has traditionally been the domain of systematic knowledge with strong disciplinary boundaries such as science, modern studies or languages. Caribbean Studies has 'weak boundaries' and is perhaps symptomatic of a postmodern curriculum celebrating the interconnected nature of knowledge and people. To facilitate the interdisciplinary approach, related themes and core concepts have been used to structure each module. The thematic approach is very useful in organising teaching and learning materials which are integrated in an attempt to promote meaning in the real world rather than just disciplinary knowledge.

Undoubtedly, the major aim of such a study is to bring to awareness in Caribbean youth a comprehensive understanding of the potential and challenges of the region. The text is written especially for the post-secondary and tertiary student, targeting those issues threatening human development in the region. This emphasis is addressed through a number of strategies and approaches which are detailed below.

■ **Content.** The expository part of the text emphasises issues important in generating and developing knowledge of the past, present and future of the region. It deals specifically with the challenge of

human and economic development in small states, especially within a context of global interaction. While factual content is provided, this is subservient to the main intention of engaging the student in thinking through important issues.

■ **Activities.** There are both lower-order knowledge items and activities designed to deepen the reflective spirit and encourage analytical and critical thinking. There is some focus on helping a person to understand his or her own role in shaping the region.

■ **Boxes.** These give greater detail to issues introduced in the text and may highlight the unique experience of specific Caribbean countries. Within the general Caribbean region it is important to realise that experiences may differ from one territory to another. Boxes may also be used for showcasing divergent and controversial views to provoke thought and discussion.

The text has been conceptualised and written with a particular view of the learner in mind. For example, the student is envisaged as one who has an interest in the Caribbean and its links with the wider world, but little specific pre-knowledge of other Caribbean countries. At the same time, the learner has the desire to discuss controversial and provocative issues dealing with society, culture, youth and development but has not had much experience in reflecting on his or her own preferred ways of thinking and prejudices. Thus, the text emphasises important specific details of different Caribbean countries and proposes or provokes some deeper thinking and self-introspection.

Elements of a constructivist approach have been used to help students to continue to develop a sense of Caribbean identity and a greater appreciation of the region's potential and problems. Thus, it is highly affective and the factual, definitional aspects of content are used as a platform to encourage students to engage in reflective and analytical thinking. The activities represent a major area of stimulation in developing these skills and competencies, especially bringing to the fore the role which the individual plays in society, culture and development.

Jeniffer Mohammed

Dedication

This book is dedicated to Sylvia, Curt, Mikhail, Nikolai and Isabel.



Caribbean Society and Culture

One of the goals of Caribbean Studies is to develop a Caribbean citizen who has a deep awareness and understanding of the challenges and possibilities of the region. Module 1 seeks to develop this awareness and understanding through a study of Caribbean society and culture, focusing particularly on the impact of geography and history on the formation of that culture, and the interactions between different groups in the Caribbean who have settled here from across the world.

To grasp the opportunities and avoid the pitfalls of development, Caribbean citizens should be thoroughly knowledgeable about how their societies were created and how they developed – and indeed continue to function – in contexts of constant change, conflict and contradiction. Understanding of the ongoing development of the region also involves awareness of the evolution of the Caribbean diaspora and its influence on both the Caribbean region itself and societies and cultures outside.

MODULE OBJECTIVES



On completing this module, you will be able to:

1. understand the factors which have shaped Caribbean societies and cultures, including the history and geography of the region;
2. appreciate how the culture of the region has developed through the experiences of Caribbean peoples;
3. understand the features which unite the region, and those that give it its cultural diversity;
4. assess the dilemmas that Caribbean society and culture experience in their intra-regional and extra-regional relationships;
5. relate what you have learned to your own individual life and the life of your community.

1

Locating the Caribbean



Seven Mile Beach, Negril, Jamaica

Before we can attempt a meaningful study of the society and culture of the Caribbean, it is necessary to define and locate the region we will be studying (see diagram opposite). Usually, a people's location can be given with reference to some physical or geographical feature, such as water that surrounds them or a mountain range that separates them from another people. But sometimes, the society, culture or history of a people produce a better definition of their location.

For example, if we had to locate and define Lapland, the most useful thing we could say is that it is a region in northern Scandinavia where the Lapps – a distinct social and cultural group – live. Trying to define and locate the Caribbean may well lead us to evaluate the part played by culture and society as well as physical and geographical boundaries as dimensions that define and locate a region.



Mayan children in Maya procession, Santiago de Atitlan, Guatemala

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. locate and define the Caribbean using different criteria;
2. locate territories, subregions and water bodies on maps of the Caribbean;
3. evaluate the importance of different criteria – geographical, historical, geological and political – in defining and locating the Caribbean;
4. approach culture and society as issues related to the definition and location of a region;
5. appreciate the importance of the Caribbean diaspora.

1.1

Geography, geology and the Caribbean region

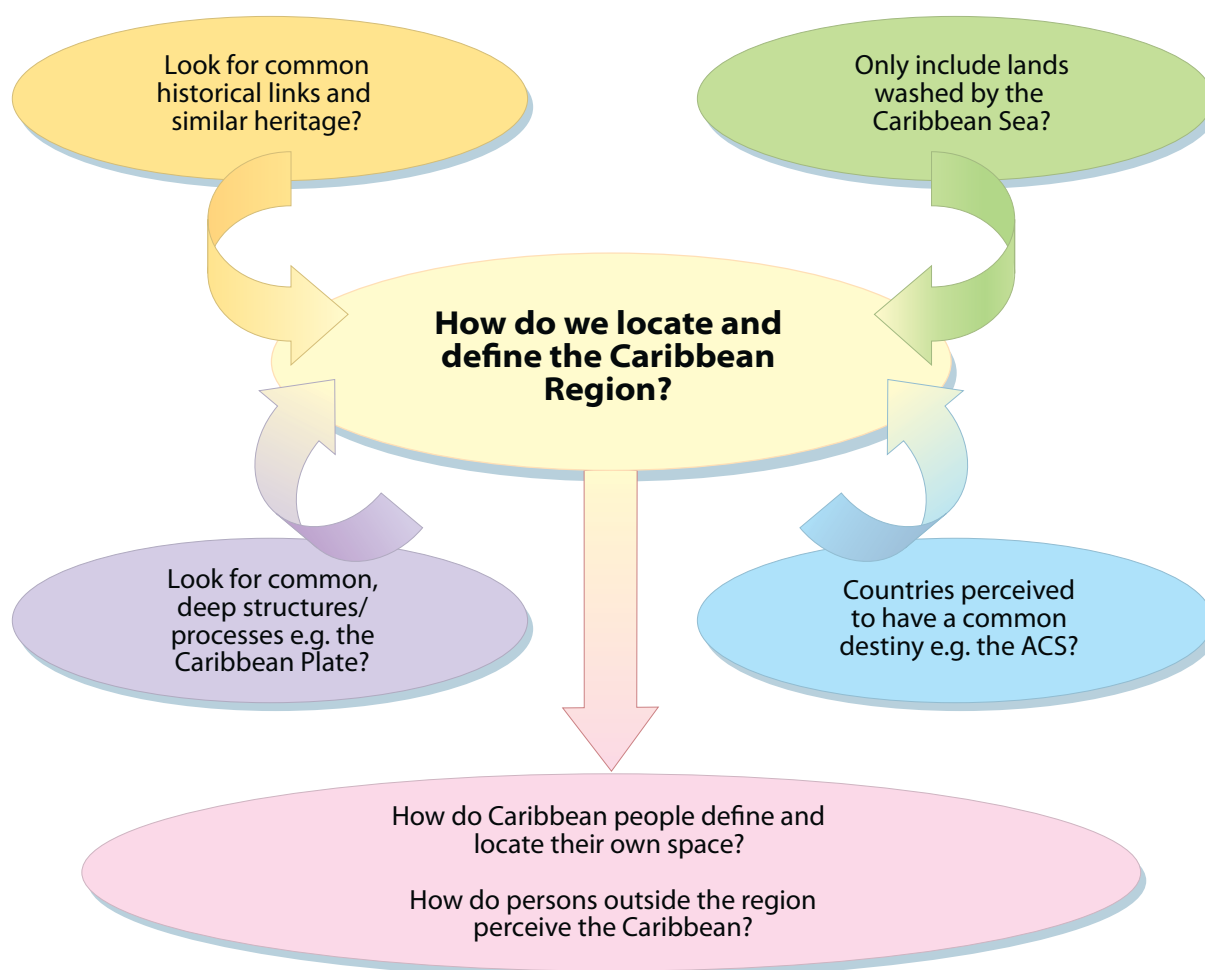


Fig. 1.1 How do we locate the Caribbean?

1.1.1 A Geographic Definition: The Caribbean Basin

A geographic basis for delimiting the Caribbean region is a familiar idea. It is based on the concept of a 'Caribbean Basin' where the central identifying feature is the Caribbean Sea, rimmed by islands and the mainland territories of Central and South America. This is the traditional geographic definition of the Caribbean region, which is usually described as 'lands washed by the Caribbean Sea'. Another definition names the region after the islands of the 'West Indies' (see Box 1.1 for reasons why the name was used) and includes the surrounding mainland territories.

We can also define the Caribbean using coordinates such as lines of latitude and longitude to locate the region. Fig. 1.2 shows the Caribbean stretching from longitude 60°W to 85°W (longitudes are given as east or west of the Greenwich Meridian). These are approximate coordinates used in defining the Caribbean and are fairly well accepted in establishing the breadth of the region. However, the map also shows the region as stretching from near the Equator (Guyana is 5°N of the Equator) to beyond 25°N. This northernmost limit is debatable and is sometimes extended to 30°N to accommodate Bermuda.

BOX 1.1

Naming the West Indies

The name *West Indies* comes from a misunderstanding on the part of Columbus and others of his time. 'The Indies' was a term long used by Europeans to describe the islands to the east of India (mainly what is present-day Indonesia). When it was realised that Columbus had stumbled on islands that were not the sought-for spice islands of the East, a distinction was drawn by simply putting 'east' or 'west' before the term 'the Indies'. Thus, the East Indies and West Indies came into being and have been a source of confusion ever since. Today there is no country or group of countries one can identify as the East Indies; the term has fallen into disuse. However, the West Indies remains very much in use, as an alternative for the Caribbean when referring specifically to the islands rather than the mainland territories of Guyana and Belize.



Fig. 1.2 The geographic Caribbean

Thus, even geographically, the idea of the ‘Caribbean Basin’ and even the coordinates of latitude and longitude are interpreted subjectively.

The map also shows the main territories, islands, **archipelagos**, subregions and **water bodies** found in

An **archipelago** is a chain of islands that is usually closely related at a subterranean level. For example, the Lesser Antilles forms a chain of small islands that exhibit similar volcanic features. The Greater Antilles is an older archipelago of much larger islands. The Bahamas is also an archipelago.

Water bodies include lakes and inland seas as well as gulfs and oceans. The water bodies found in the Caribbean and its environs are the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean.

the Caribbean. We must be careful to distinguish between islands and continental countries and avoid over-generalisation as in statements such as ‘the islands of the Caribbean’. For example, the territory of Belize in Central America is a large landmass that is nevertheless considered to be as ‘Caribbean’ as any of the islands. Fig. 1.2 also shows how close the Pacific Ocean is to the Caribbean at the **isthmus** of Panama.

An **isthmus** is a narrow neck of land separating two water bodies, and thus the Pacific Ocean is also considered to be part of the ‘environs’ of the Caribbean.

Geographical subregions

It is possible to identify subregions because the region is so large. The Greater Antilles are the larger islands, Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola and Puerto Rico, while the Lesser Antilles subregion is further subdivided into the Windward and Leeward Islands. Box 1.2 looks at the Lesser Antilles and its subdivisions in more detail.

Geography and Caribbean identity

The geographic conception of the Caribbean is based on a view of the Caribbean Sea as a basin with the surrounding territories representing the limits of the basin. However, this definition is not comprehensive in that it would exclude countries that are normally accepted as Caribbean countries, such as Guyana, Barbados, Bermuda and the Bahamas. Barbados and Guyana are located to the east of the Caribbean Basin, in the Atlantic Ocean. The Bahamas are located further north, off the coast of Florida. All are very close to the

BOX 1.2

The Lesser Antilles – a historical complex

In the Anglophone Caribbean the term *Lesser Antilles* includes the Windward Islands – Grenada, St Vincent and the Grenadines, St Lucia, Martinique, Dominica and Guadeloupe – and the Leeward Islands – Antigua, St Kitts, Nevis, Montserrat, to name a few. The Leeward Islands are smaller than the Windward Islands and located further north and west. There is no valid geographical reason to call the southern end of this chain ‘Windward’ and the northern end ‘Leeward’, since the whole chain is subject to the prevailing north-east trade winds. The origin of these names lies in the islands’ complex colonial past, and even the terminology is inconsistent from one cultural area to another. Originally the Spanish settlers called Puerto Rico and the islands to the east *Islas das Barlovento*, meaning ‘windward islands’, and the islands to the west, closer to mainland America, *Sotavento* or ‘leeward islands’. British colonialism subtly altered this designation, and to this day different languages still apply these names to different groupings of islands. For example, the names *Isles de Vent*/*Islas das Barlovento* in French and Spanish respectively refer to most of the Lesser Antilles, not just the section the Anglophone Caribbean calls the Windward Islands, while the designation *Leeward Islands* also varies in Spanish, French and Dutch.

Caribbean itself. Bermuda is an especially anomalous case. It is not even shown on Fig. 1.2 because it is in the Atlantic Ocean, about 950 km (600 miles) off the North Carolina coast. Bermuda is an archipelago of some 200 islands, only 20 of which are inhabited. These are the tops of submarine ridges on which coral has grown. We should also remember that in the distant past, when the earliest Amerindian groups settled in the Caribbean (see Chapter 2), some of the territories that are now islands, for example Trinidad, were still attached to the mainland. Going back even further, into the Cretaceous period, long before there were any human beings to settle anywhere, the volcanic island archipelagos had not yet formed. And today the movement of the Caribbean tectonic plate (see §1.1.2 below) is pushing the Caribbean

islands eastwards, away from the mainland. So even geographically locating the region is not straightforward.

Thus there are some countries which have long been considered to be part of the Caribbean but are excluded if a strict geographical definition is applied. This implies that the cultural background of Caribbean countries is just as important as their geography. For example, Guyana is considered to be Caribbean although it

borders the Atlantic Ocean rather than the Caribbean Basin, because the social and cultural experiences of its people are similar to those of the people of the islands in the Caribbean Sea.

The opposite is also the case. There are some countries which are not widely accepted as 'Caribbean' although they are 'washed by the Caribbean Sea'. Activity 1.1 invites you to further examine this issue.

ACTIVITY 1.1

Mapwork

1. On the blank map of the Caribbean region provided, locate and label the following:
 - a. water bodies – the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico, the Pacific Ocean;
 - b. the Greater Antilles and the Lesser Antilles;
 - c. the isthmus of Panama.
 Check your work against Fig. 1.2.
2. Shade the territories that you consider are normally included in the Caribbean region.
3. Read over the previous section and look again at Fig. 1.2 in attempting the following exercise.

- a. Identify FOUR countries shown on Fig. 1.2 whose geography would define them as part of the geographic Caribbean, but which are nevertheless not widely accepted as 'Caribbean' by people in the region.
- b. Name the regional grouping to which each country is normally attached.
- c. Suggest ONE reason why each country is not accepted as part of the Caribbean and analyse whether this relates to its economic, political, social or cultural background.



The Wider Caribbean

Countries such as Mexico, Honduras, Panama or Nicaragua may thus be perceived by West Indian peoples as belonging to the Latin American mainland, and not the Caribbean at all, even though they may have a coast on the Caribbean Sea, and this perception may be shared by the peoples of those countries themselves. These large countries may also have coasts on the Pacific; to include any of them as Caribbean suggests that we have some specific criteria as to where the Caribbean begins and ends in these lands. Trying to apply strict physical limits to social and cultural perceptions leads us into this kind of predicament.

Interestingly, in recent times we have seen international agreements such as the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) and regional organisations such as the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) include these countries as part of the 'Wider Caribbean' region. It seems, then, that when outsiders view the region, or when we who are inside the Caribbean need to assume a broad or holistic view, perhaps in trade and economic cooperation initiatives, we adopt something closely resembling a geographic conception of the region. If geography is taken as playing a defining role for the Caribbean then it may well be that the interpretation of the Caribbean by international bodies (e.g. the Wider Caribbean) may emerge as a more accepted version of 'what is the Caribbean' in the future – accepted, that is, by the international community. Locally, there will always be differences of opinion.

1.1.2 Geological Conceptions of the Caribbean: the Caribbean Plate

There is another conception of the Caribbean that is not widely discussed – the Caribbean as described by geologists and seismologists. The defining feature here is the Caribbean Plate, which has marked boundaries or margins where it meets other **tectonic plates**. Much of

A **tectonic plate** is part of the Earth's crust, underlying the land and oceans that we can see.

the Caribbean region lies on the Caribbean Plate, one of the smaller plates to be found on the Earth's crust. Its boundaries are shown in Fig. 1.3 below and these define the Caribbean region in terms of **seismic activity**.

Seismic activity refers to Earth movements that impact and influence the surface of the Earth.

Earthquakes, volcanic activity and mountain building are examples of seismic or tectonic activities that occur along plate margins as they move and interact with other plates. More detail is given on plate tectonics in Chapter 5.

You will notice on Fig. 1.3 that the western edge of the Caribbean Plate is in the Pacific Ocean. While the other margins of the plate may conform largely to traditional geographic conceptions of the Caribbean, this western edge alerts us to the fact that surface geography may well delude us as to what is happening at a subterranean level. Since earthquake, volcanic and mountain-building activities impact human beings both directly and indirectly,

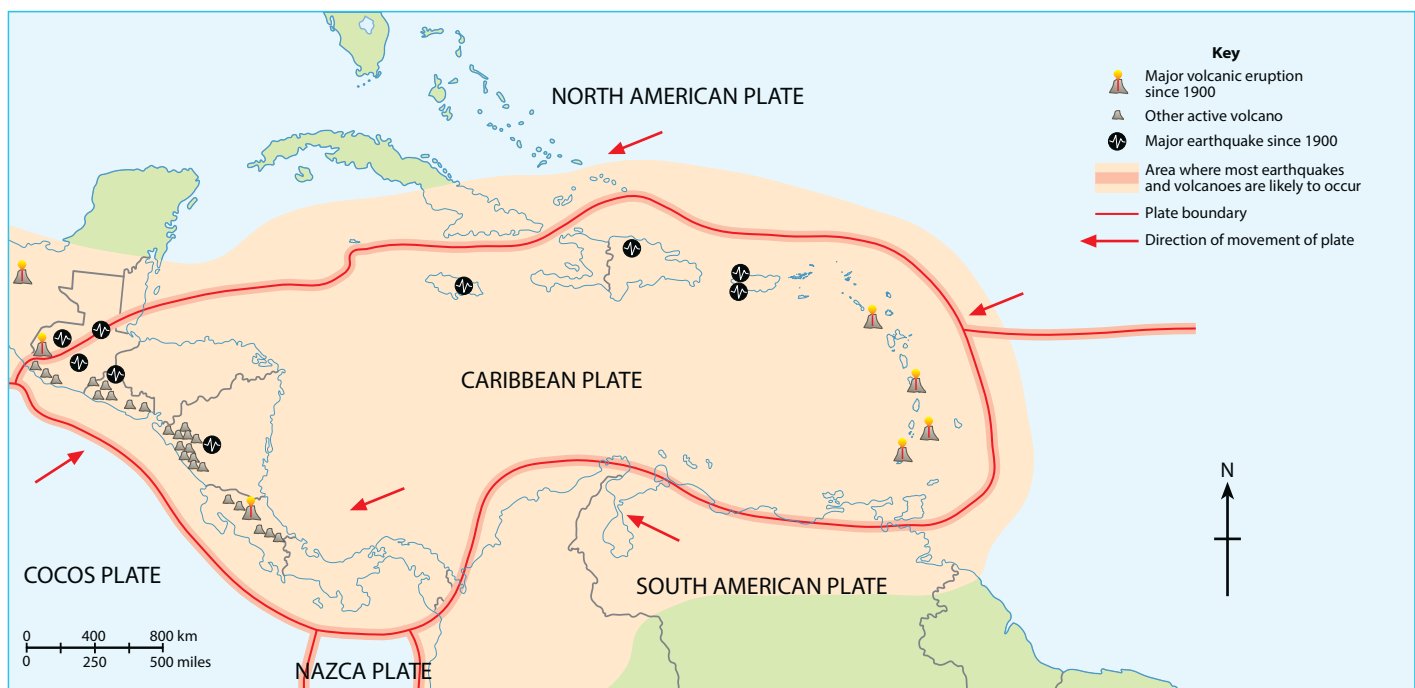


Fig. 1.3 The geologic Caribbean: the Caribbean Plate

and since these activities and processes are linked deep in the Earth's crust, we need to become more aware of the Caribbean as a geological entity.

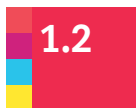
While the Caribbean Plate is a significant entity on which to build our conception of a Caribbean region, it does not include Guyana, the Bahamas, and much of Cuba. Like geography, then, geology alone cannot give us a comprehensive organising framework to define the Caribbean.



SUMMARY

Using the Caribbean Sea as the central organising feature is only partially successful in attempting to define and locate the Caribbean. Physical geography can only define and locate a space in terms of neutral expanses of landforms and water bodies, or geologically in terms of the Caribbean Plate. Thus trying to delimit Caribbean society and culture using physical geography criteria results in obvious anomalies. In addition, if we define the Caribbean using the boundaries of *physical* geography, such as the Caribbean Basin, we define a different Caribbean than if we were using *human* geography. The latter takes into account the historical, social and cultural lives of people in a particular region, as well as the differences among them that are often used to define the limits of their territory.

From the geographic and geologic conceptions of the Caribbean a picture emerges, however, of a 'Wider Caribbean' region that is built on the natural, physical features of the Earth's crust. We have also seen that this view of the Caribbean is akin to that of contemporary global and regional organisations, and even that of the tourist. At the same time, people in the Caribbean islands are somewhat reluctant to embrace only geography in defining the Caribbean. They feel that geography is important but not as important as history. So it is to history that we will turn next.



1.2

The historical Caribbean and its cultural legacy

Defining and locating 'space' only according to geography and geology does not acknowledge the importance of human activities and relationships in demarcating

a region. The idea of space in physical geography and geology resembles a container in which objects exist. Those who view history as the important dimension in locating the region choose to emphasise instead *how* people regard their space as well as *what* they regard as their space. For example, the following factors can transcend geographical barriers:

- long and continuous occupation over time;
- a sense of belonging to a place;
- the building of a way of life or culture.

Thus, although, as we have seen, Barbados, Guyana and The Bahamas are located in the Atlantic Ocean, the historical processes that shaped these territories were similar – in many ways identical – to those experienced on the islands of the Caribbean Sea. These historical processes include:

- occupation of the area by the indigenous people;
- European exploration and settlement;
- genocide and war waged against the indigenes;
- African slavery in all and Indian indentureship in some;
- colonialism;
- socioeconomic developments related to the plantation;
- independence, and the forging of a free society based on these experiences.

We shall look in some detail at these historical processes in the next two chapters.

1.2.1

The Cultural Heritage of Latin America and the Caribbean

One may well remark that the entire New World was subject to such developments. In fact, the whole area known as 'Latin America' (most of Central and South America and the Caribbean) had a very similar history. Yet today the Caribbean is considered to be separate and distinct from Central and South America. Only part of Central America – the country of Belize – is normally included in the Caribbean region. If the history of the New World had so many similarities one must wonder why the countries developed so differently. Not only is the Caribbean different from Central and South America, but within the Caribbean itself there are marked variations as well.

The study of history involves describing and analysing significant events, trends and processes over time, but it also examines how such phenomena are experienced differently in different locales and contexts. Although the entire sweep of Central and South America underwent the historical experiences mentioned above, the Caribbean reflects the legacy of a particular combination of European

nations who were intruders into the original Spanish Main. While the European heritage of the majority of Latin American countries is rooted in the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal), that of the countries of the Caribbean encompasses the varied legacies of Britain, France, Holland and (to a lesser extent) Denmark overlaid on an earlier Spanish foundation. Notice that we are defining regions according to the legacy of Europeans. Whether they are Spanish and Portuguese on the one hand, or British, French or Dutch on the other, the fact remains that, in defining the Caribbean using historical criteria, the European influence looms larger than that of the indigenous peoples, or even of those who were brought here later as enslaved and indentured labourers. It has been said, with some truth, that history is written by the victors, and by those who rule. Latin America and the Caribbean are divided by differences in the culture of their colonial masters rather than by their shared history.

It is chiefly language that embodies these cultural differences and presents the major distinguishing factor between the Caribbean and the wider Latin American region. However, on this view the history, the language and cultural heritage of Cuba and the Dominican Republic, and to a lesser extent Puerto Rico, ought to place them squarely with the mainland territories of Latin America. Geography locates them in the Caribbean but history links them to the Spanish-speaking countries of Central and South America. So, while language can be used to differentiate the countries of the Caribbean from the Iberian ex-colonies on the mainland, it is clear that exceptions occur. Just as in physical geography, where traditionally the Caribbean Sea has been used as a central unifying feature, one factor alone cannot be expected to locate and define the Caribbean. There are always anomalies and exceptions.

1.2.2 Cultural Diversity Within the Caribbean

The West Indies

To address the question of social and cultural diversity in the Caribbean, we must first take a closer look at the West Indies and see how West Indians define and locate their space. In doing so, we again find cleavages along the lines of the European legacy. So, we can define and locate a British (or Anglophone) West Indies, a French West Indies, a Dutch West Indies (commonly called the Dutch Antilles) and the Spanish-speaking West Indies. Governance, trade and migration under colonialism occurred in the Caribbean as if geographical proximity did not exist and only the colonial ties were important. Thus, the British islands and territories developed

relationships with each other and Britain and had minimal involvement with nearby French, Dutch or Spanish islands and territories. The French and Spanish colonies also only developed deep cultural ties with their own metropolitan countries.

Research mini-project

Taking the history of your country as an example, identify as many aspects as you can that differentiate it from the historical experiences of Central or South America. Are there aspects of shared history that might allow links to grow in the future?

It is clear then that in the West Indies the historical and cultural ties which people acknowledge as more important than geography in defining their region are aligned mainly along the differences wrought by the European legacy – one of the most evident and immediate being language. If this is so then it is hardly likely that people in the French, Dutch or British West Indies will readily include the people of Venezuela, Colombia and Central America as part of their region. It also explains why countries such as Guyana and Belize, though on the American mainland, have come to be accepted with the English-speaking islands of the Lesser Antilles in the Anglophone Caribbean.

ACTIVITY 1.2

1. Describe TWO ways in which an area such as the Caribbean region can be geographically located.
2. Identify TWO forces that are influencing the Caribbean which are urging a definition of the Caribbean as the 'Wider Caribbean' region.

The influence of CARICOM

With the coming of CARICOM (the Caribbean Community and Common Market), cultural and linguistic ties between some Caribbean territories and their **metropolises** have weakened and the links between

The **metropole** or metropolitan country is the country which dominates or has dominated a territory politically and/or culturally (often the former colonial power).

some countries with different European heritages have become stronger. (You will learn more about regional integration in Chapter 12.)

Table 1.1 Cultural/linguistic heritage represented by the CARICOM membership

Anglophone (English)	Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago; Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Is, Cayman Is, Turks and Caicos Is (associate members)
Francophone (French)	Haiti
Dutch	Suriname (associated member)

ACTIVITY 1.3

Table 1.1 shows the current membership of CARICOM and the cultural heritages its members represent.

- 3. Identify which cultural/linguistic tradition dominates CARICOM. Describe TWO historical events or processes that have caused this.
- 4. Which cultural heritages are unrepresented in the organisation? Suggest TWO different explanations for this phenomenon.
- 5. Do some Internet research to find out why Haiti is not a typical Francophone territory. Suggest ONE reason for its inclusion in CARICOM when other Francophone territories are not members.

SUMMARY

There is something of a consensus that history represents the best possible guide in defining the Caribbean. Even though there are many variations in historical and cultural experiences from one country to another, these variations stem largely from the influence of Europeans in the region and are significant in how Caribbean people define themselves today in relation to the region as a whole. The legacies of the British, French, Spanish, Dutch and Danes in the relatively small area of the Caribbean, compared to the overwhelming presence of the Spanish and Portuguese in Central and South America, probably goes furthest in trying to delimit the Caribbean from its Latin American counterparts.

How people perceive space and what they regard as theirs as opposed to others’ space affects how they receive

attempts from outside to prescribe, locate and define their region. For instance, in the deliberations of the CBI (Caribbean Basin Initiative), the ACS (Association of Caribbean States) and the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) – and, as mentioned before, in the tourist industry’s perception of what constitutes the Caribbean – these cultural and linguistic differences are not recognised as significant enough to carve up the region. To people outside the region, Mexico, Colombia and Panama appear to be a logical part of the Caribbean. To people inside the region, particularly the West Indies, it is quite another matter.

1.3

The political Caribbean: the ‘many Caribbeans’

At present the political entities comprising the Caribbean are diverse and at varying stages in achieving political autonomy from the colonial powers that were once dominant in the region. The Caribbean as a single political entity is as yet only an ideal raised by Caribbean visionaries, statesmen and those deeply involved in the integration movement. The notion of a Caribbean citizenship or a CARICOM citizen, often heard in rhetoric, is really a cultural yearning rather than any indication of present political reality.

Citizenship in the Caribbean today represents a varied set of relationships between citizens and their governments, and sometimes with governments outside the region. This diversity in political arrangements, even within CARICOM, stands in marked contrast to the political entities of Central and South America, the majority of which have had a long history of being independent, of being republics with a succession of dictators, and of struggling with democratic rule. While the Caribbean has certainly not been entirely free of dictatorships, revolution, armed interventions and coups d’état, these have been limited in impact and generally the region as a whole has been politically stable. Within the wider region, then, the Caribbean can be defined by its diverse and complex political relationships.

1.3.1

Different Forms of Government

Many Caribbean countries are now politically independent, favouring different forms of governance. Let us consider some examples of the variety of types of government found in the region.

Cuba and Guyana

Cuba is a communist country while Guyana has opted for **republic** status based on socialist principles. Both

A **republic** is a form of governance where the head of state is not a monarch but a president.

communism and socialism are theories of governance and society. They advocate *public ownership of the means of production*, which means that the state owns and runs agriculture and industry, as well as all public services. In Marxist thought socialism is regarded as a stage preceding that of communism. Socialism emphasises distribution of resources based on one's abilities and deeds, while communism is based on distribution according to needs.

The official name of Guyana (formerly British Guiana) is the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and its constitution is based on a socialist transformation of the institutions of the country. The principle of cooperativism through which this will be accomplished envisages members of the society eventually owning and sharing in the means of production.

This socialist/communist orientation has in the past incurred the disapproval of the United States, leading to intrigues and political interference in order to destabilise the regimes of both countries.

Haiti

Haiti was the first country in the Caribbean to achieve independence through revolution in 1804, and has been described since then as the Black Republic. Its form of government has ranged over its long history from revolutionary empire through dictatorship and American protection to (recently) a fragile democracy.

Commonwealth members

Some countries, though, have preferred to retain stronger ties with the metropolitan country. For example, Barbados, although independent and a parliamentary democracy, still has the British sovereign as the official head of state, as do many other former British colonies. It is important to mention here that the countries of the English-speaking Caribbean have long been members of the Commonwealth – a worldwide group of territories that were once part of the British Empire. All are independent but most continue to recognise the British monarch as the head of state (represented by a Governor General). In the English-speaking Caribbean, only Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and the Commonwealth of Dominica are republics, but they continue to be members of the Commonwealth.

Dutch colonies

Curaçao, Bonaire, Saba, Sint Eustatius and Sint Maarten are five self-governing territories of the Dutch Antilles. (It is interesting to note that Sint Maarten occupies only part of an island; St Martin, a French territory, occupies the other part.) Aruba has a different arrangement with the Kingdom of the Netherlands from the other five islands, but they are all associated with the Netherlands and their foreign policy and matters of defence are controlled by the Dutch government. They are thus colonies of the Netherlands. The Dutch monarch is head of state and represented by a governor. The Republic of Suriname, on the South American mainland, was once a part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, but is today a fully independent state.

British and French dependencies

Britain too has colonies in the Caribbean. For example, Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands, the Cayman Islands and Bermuda (see the case study in Box 1.3, page 13) are still colonies of Britain. In contrast, the French Caribbean territories are not colonies at all, but an integral part of the operations of France. Cayenne (formerly known as French Guiana), Guadeloupe, Martinique, and the smaller French islands, all belong to a **département** of

A **département** is a unit of local government similar to a country or parish.

France (the Département d'Outre-Mer: DOM or overseas department), meaning that they function as an overseas part of France. St Martin, occupying only half an island, is administered through Guadeloupe. Guadeloupe itself is an archipelago including the islands of Marie Galante, La Désirade and Iles des Saintes.

Puerto Rico

The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is a free state in association with the United States of America. It is not fully independent and is described by the United States as an *unincorporated territory*, like the US Virgin Islands. It has internal self-government and is a 'free' state in that it has a legal identity in international law. (Compare this with a colony, which is considered to be part of the territory of the metropolitan country, and thus not 'free'.) Puerto Ricans and US Virgin Islanders are citizens of the United States but they cannot vote in US elections. However, they do not pay taxes to the US government and they receive unique access and facilities denied citizens of other countries. Foreign affairs are under the control of the United States.

Locate as many as you can of the countries mentioned above on the map in Fig. 1.2.

This political diversity has a historical basis for it is bound up in European colonisation and the efforts by Caribbean people either to garner their independence or to develop viable relationships with the ‘mother country’ for growth and development (see Chapter 2.)

ACTIVITY 1.4

Table 1.2 shows some Caribbean countries in one column and a range of political statuses in the other. Match each country with its present political status. You may need to do some further research to complete this activity. (The answers are at the end of the chapter, on page 23.)

1.3.2 Citizenship

The section above called attention to the diversity of political forms in the Caribbean. Of the independent countries, some are republics and some constitutional democracies with the British or Dutch monarch still as head of state. There is also an array of dependencies, colonies, crown colonies, internal self-governing countries, associated states and *départements*. This diversity is significant not only because it differentiates the Caribbean as a distinctive region within Latin America, but also because it has implications for citizenship. Clearly what it means to be a Caribbean citizen in a

dependency or a *département* will vary considerably from what it means to be a citizen in an independent country. Box 1.3 opposite presents the case of Bermuda, a British colony, as a case study, and we will go on to explore further how citizenship varies in the ‘many Caribbeans’.

Colonies, dependencies and départements

The term **colony** describes a territory owned and administered by a metropolitan country – historically designated the mother country. However, colonies differ according to how much autonomy or freedom they have in controlling their affairs. In a colony all the laws, regulations and procedures must be in accordance with those of the metropolitan country. Even if it is self-governing, its laws cannot run counter to those of the colonial power. In the colonies mentioned above the people are automatically British or Dutch citizens. However, as we saw in the case of Bermuda (Box 1.3), while this may be considered advantageous at present, there is no guarantee that such a relationship will continue.

To be a citizen in a colony often means that there is constant tension and ongoing debate about continuing in a historically dependent relationship with a European country. Since many independent Caribbean countries are struggling with poverty, crime and unemployment, the protective link with Europe seems advantageous and so there is an ambivalence about seeking independence and joining CARICOM. At the same time, citizens are well aware that conditions change and that the European metropolitan countries may be required by the European Union (EU) to abandon their colonies in order

Table 1.2 Diverse political arrangements in the Caribbean

COUNTRY		POLITICAL STATUS	
1	Belize	A	A federation.
2	Anguilla	B	An Associated State of the US.
3	Puerto Rico	C	An independent country.
4	Dominican Republic	D	A British Overseas Territory.
5	St Barth's	E	Part of an independent state, the other members being Petit Martinique and Grenada.
6	Barbuda	F	Administered through St Martin.
7	Carriacou	G	Member of a multi-island independent state.
8	Montserrat	H	Seceded from a three-member Associated State to regain colonial status.
9	St Kitts and Nevis	I	An independent state that does not recognise a monarch as head of state.
10	Bequia	J	Part of a twin-island state.

BOX 1.3

Caribbean identity: the case of Bermuda

Britain has been in control of Bermuda since 1609, making it the oldest British colony anywhere. It became an international centre for shipping and trading because of its strategic location in the mid-Atlantic. Although slavery existed there, the enslaved persons worked mainly as sailors, traders and artisans. The Bermudians have retained their close links with Britain, much as Martinique, Guadeloupe and other French colonies have done as overseas *départements* of France.

Here are some political, economic and sociological facts about Bermuda today:

- Bermudians are full British citizens. They are responsible for their internal self-government, foreign affairs being overseen by the Governor, who represents the British monarch. The 1995 independence referendum indicated that 70 per cent of the voters were against independence.
- Bermuda has the third highest per capita income in the world; there is no unemployment and no income tax.
- Because Bermuda lies some 1600 km (1000 miles) north of the Lesser Antilles there is very little communication of any kind between those islands and the rest of the Caribbean. Bermudians travel to the United States and Britain for their tertiary education, much more so than other Caribbean people.
- Approximately 40 per cent of Bermuda's population is white (descendants of English and Scottish settlers, and of Portuguese immigrants) and 60 per cent black. There are tensions between these groups, with the whites owning most of the productive land and other assets.
- Bermuda is an associate member of CARICOM. There has been a heated national debate on closer links with the Caribbean Community. Those against it argue that:
 - there is a danger of a mass migration from those Caribbean countries that are struggling with poverty and scarce resources if full membership of CARICOM is achieved, especially with the implementation of the CSME (CARICOM Single Market and Economy);
 - becoming a member of CARICOM may mean Bermuda giving up colonial status and British citizenship.

In addition, there is a minority opinion which views the issue in terms of race and ethnicity – Bermudians of Portuguese descent have strong ties with the Azores, and those of British descent maintain links with the mother country, but black Bermudians have no strong ties with Africa or even the Caribbean, in spite of the obvious links with people who share a similar history, culture and ethnic make-up.

On the other side, some voices argue that although Bermuda is enjoying prosperity and a high standard of living because of its ties to the UK and its importance as a tax haven for big corporations, that link may be precarious in this age of globalisation, as shown recently by efforts to change US corporate law and deny federal contracts to American companies locating in **offshore havens** such as Bermuda.

An **offshore haven** is a country (often an island) where taxes are low and which provides large companies and wealthy individuals with the opportunity to safeguard their money and thus avoid paying taxes on the mainland.

To be mindful of the well-being of Bermudians in the future, it may make good sense to forge closer alliances of all kinds with the Caribbean. Bermudians also point out that the country is not in control of its own foreign policy and thus has to rely on the UK for its security.

to continue with EU membership. Citizenship in these countries then is hotly debated, with the fate of political parties depending on their stance on this issue.

While the term *dependency* is generally used for a colony, it is sometimes reserved specifically for a colony where all economic and political activities are controlled through the metropolitan country. The economic

condition of the colony is usually the deciding factor in whether it is spoken of as a dependency or not. A dependency is not considered to be economically viable on its own and can only survive through substantial grants from the metropole. For example, the Turks and Caicos Islands are a British colony, sometimes described as a dependency. Officially, the Turks and Caicos, the

Cayman Islands, the British Virgin Islands (BVI) and Montserrat are all crown colonies of Britain. They are not all financially dependent as some have flourishing tourist and offshore industries (especially the Caymans and the BVI) and need less overseas development aid than, say, the Turks and Caicos. However, crown colony status means that there is limited internal self-government, and defence, foreign affairs, internal security and various financial and administrative matters are controlled by Britain. Note though that Anguilla is a fully self-governing territory, described as an associated state of Britain, and that Bermuda, because of its long history as a colony and its economic prosperity, enjoys more autonomy than the other territories (Box 1.3). This array of terms describing stages on the road to self-government and full independence may be confusing, especially when the same term, for example 'crown colony', may vary in meaning. Thus, the Turks and Caicos, the Caymans, the BVI and Montserrat are not governed in exactly the same way. There are variations because each country's governance system evolved differently according to historical circumstances. Recently the UK announced that the term 'British overseas territory' should be used for all its dependent territories.

These British overseas territories in today's Caribbean represent a problem of sorts to Britain. If Britain's original intention was to wean these colonies towards independence (see Box 1.4), then the harsh reality is that they are either too small or have too few resources to take responsibility for their own affairs. In the past the British have tried various experiments in combining territories so that collectively they could become a self-sustaining unit. Examples are Trinidad and Tobago; Grenada; Carriacou and Petit Martinique; St Vincent and the Grenadines; and Antigua and Barbuda. These territories, although located close to each other, do not necessarily feel the same sense of identity or nationalism. From time to time there have been threats by one island or another to secede from these apparently expedient arrangements made by Britain.

The French Caribbean is unique in that its territories all belong to an overseas *département* of France. The territories of Cayenne, Guadeloupe, Marie Galante, Iles des Saintes, La Désirade, Martinique, St Martin and St Barth's are not colonies; they are part of France, merely overseas, and the people are French citizens. There is no official flag, for example, for Martinique, and only very limited political participation through the popularly elected general and regional councils, but Martinicans have the right to vote in national elections. Each French *département* sends its deputies to sit in the French National

Assembly in Paris. Politically speaking, the French Caribbean is fully assimilated into France. However, citizenship is an ever-present, potentially explosive issue that rears its head from time to time. Nationalist groups in Guadeloupe and Martinique, although not in the majority, say that on the basis of human rights they should be independent, that it is less than human to be ruled from outside. Similar sentiments are also detected in all the colonies of the British and Dutch Caribbean.

The independence movement in French overseas *départements* is small but at times such sentiments run high. French Caribbean citizens enjoy the economic advantages and opportunities that stem from being a part of France. Yet it rankles that neither Martinique nor Guadeloupe is recognised as an identifiable country with its own customs and ways of life that are quite distinct from those of France. As far as France is concerned, Martinique does not exist as a separate entity – what is important is France. Compare the position in the British overseas territories, where the colonies are recognised as separate and the citizens can never become Britons!

Of serious concern too is the racism experienced by French Caribbean people in France. Official policies stress equality but in reality migrants from the Caribbean and elsewhere report racial undertones. France has long been receiving migrants from its Caribbean territories, so that today there is a huge Caribbean population. The resulting problems are similar to those of Puerto Ricans in New York and Jamaicans in Liverpool, attesting to the hollowness of French claims that French Caribbean people are equal to the native French population in all respects. This conflictual notion of citizenship within a colonial relationship that purports not to be colonial, that is shaped by ethnicity but is said to be colour blind, is probably the strongest argument for those groups seeking independence.

As elsewhere in the Caribbean, in Puerto Rico citizenship is hotly contested. Perhaps it is stronger here than in other countries, since it is a large territory with strong nationalist sentiment and enjoys more autonomy than a colony. The debate concerns the relative advantages and disadvantages of

- a. remaining as an Associated State of the US;
- b. pressing for complete statehood within the US; or
- c. seeking independence.

The United States is a major superpower and 'owning' Caribbean territory gives it certain geopolitical or strategic advantages, which it would not easily relinquish. Citizenship will continue to be a contentious issue in Puerto Rico, but perhaps less so in the US Virgin Islands.

BOX 1.4

British and French colonialism in the Caribbean

There is a direct contrast between the many terms and stages used to describe British overseas territories and the French equivalent known as *départements*. This difference stems directly from the theories or philosophies held by Britain and France about their respective colonial relationships. Where the British overseas territories are concerned, a colony may be described as a dependency, a crown colony or an associated territory. Each entity represents varying stages of autonomy granted to the dependent territory, culminating in independence.

For both Britain and France their empires provided the opportunity to promote their own culture and civilisation abroad. Colonisation was based on the idea that the civilisation and culture of the coloniser was superior to that of the colonised. Ostensibly, the metropolitan countries played a protective role towards their colonies over the centuries, putting procedures, laws, education and mechanisms in place that mirrored British or French society and culture. The underlying assumption was that, through guidance and nurturing, the diverse peoples around the world would learn to value and adopt a British or French way of life. However, the two philosophies diverged after that. Under British colonisation, the countries which became independent were those thought to have demonstrated maturity in developing political and economic institutions on the British model. They were therefore able to engage in parliamentary government and sustain viable economies on their own. Little acknowledgement was made when speaking of independence of the efforts made by Caribbean people in resisting colonial rule and the necessity felt by Britain to get rid of as many colonies as possible during its austerity period after the Second World War. Moves towards membership of the European Economic Community (which became the EU) were also influential in Britain turning away from its former colonial possessions.

Compared to the British, the French had quite different ideas about colonial rule. Each, however, was concerned with the supremacy of its own culture in civilising people and lands won through empire-building. The British felt that although such people could never become Britons, they could come to appreciate British culture and institutions through a long process of **acculturation**. Thus, in

Acculturation refers to the process whereby one culture profoundly influences another.

the British philosophy of colonialism these lands and nations would be graduated through a series of stages, showing that they were becoming increasingly competent to govern themselves. Implicit in this is the assumption that British culture is pre-eminent and incomparable, and that, while others could benefit by prolonged interaction with its customs and institutions, they could never truly become Britons.

While the French position is quite different, they are both 'supremacist' positions and represent different theories of colonisation. The French are of the opinion that they have developed a civilisation that is unique, and that through immersion in the French way of life anybody anywhere can not only develop an appreciation of it or be able to practise it, but can become French. The French colonial mission was to civilise the world through a philosophy of **cultural assimilation**. Thus we see in

Cultural assimilation refers to the incorporation of a group of colonised people or migrants into the dominant culture of the metropolitan or host country.

the Caribbean that the French territories are literally French: they belong to an overseas *département* of France. All the people are French citizens without any qualification of being 'overseas citizens'. As a result they are 'ultra-peripheral' regions of the European Union. There are no restrictions on travel and many have migrated to France. Many native, white French people have also migrated from France to live in Martinique and Guadeloupe. Within a business or government department one can be transferred from Marseilles to Basse-terre and vice versa.

The British model of colonisation, by contrast, emphasised the inculcation of British culture and then graduating the colony to independence through a series of stages. Often overlooked is the fact that there was no deep-seated thrust towards helping the territories to develop shared partnerships large enough to put them on a better footing with other nations of the world. The unions and associations that were tried by Britain (Box 1.5, page 16) were merely expedient solutions, not very mindful of the cultural differences between the colonies or their fear of being dominated by larger partners. The many abortive attempts at union attest to this failure.

Citizenship and decolonisation

The present political entities in the Caribbean evolved from their historic association with Europe and later on with the United States. Their status, such as dependency or *département*, arises from different theories about colonialism (Box 1.4). Even the countries that are independent today embody a colonial relationship. Many were granted independence at a time when it was increasingly inconvenient for Britain to bring its sugar-producing colonies with it when it entered the Common Market and, later, the European Economic Community. Today, the UK's deepening relationships within the EU put all its dependent territories in the Caribbean in an ambivalent position, though the French solution to the problem of colonialism within the EU does not appear to have had the same effect. It is interesting to note that in the independent countries of the Caribbean citizenship is as contentious an issue as in colonies and *départements* struggling for and against the idea of independence.

In trying to understand the political Caribbean and citizenship issues in the English-speaking territories today, we need to look more closely at the ideas underlying British colonisation, the major goal of which was spreading British culture across the globe. At the same time there was a clear understanding that 'natives'

(West Indians) could not become Britons. While Britain was prepared to teach us its customs and ways of life, helping us to develop in the image of the 'mother country', there was a line that kept us apart. We see this, for example, in how citizenship was granted and how colonies were graduated into dependent existence.

British citizenship was a temporary arrangement granted only until the colony was graduated to independent status. For example, Montserratians are British citizens today but they are not Britons – and they can never become Britons; they remain Montserratians even though they have British citizenship. But they could become independent, if they so choose. Thus, the process of 'graduation' is really one of becoming more entrenched in a British way of life, until the ultimate is reached when one can become independent of the mother country. Where very small colonies are concerned, the normal course can only occur if various unions and associations are found acceptable. And, as Box 1.5 shows, Britain has tried to force unions on us in the past, many of which have collapsed. Continuing to maintain and govern small dependent territories indefinitely is contrary to the British conception of colonisation.

Compared to the French Antilles, then, the English-speaking territories today display much variation in

BOX 1.5

British experiments in Caribbean federation

One experiment that the British tried was to combine the Leeward Islands as the Leeward Islands Federation. When this broke up in 1956 each island reverted to being a separate colony. In 1958 the British established the West Indies Federation, a wider body encompassing most of the English-speaking Caribbean countries, but this broke up in 1962. (There is more detail on the evolution of integration, including the fate of the West Indies Federation in Chapter 12.)

Britain next formed the Windward and Leeward Islands Associated States. Associated statehood involved developing full internal self-government, while Britain retained control of defence and external affairs. By 1967 the unit of St Kitts, Nevis and Anguilla was undergoing the transition to associated statehood with Britain. However, Anguillans voiced increasing discontent about the close ties with St Kitts. They knew that in the arrangements being made for associated statehood

and then independence they would be controlled by St Kitts. By 1969, through much political unrest including violent uprising, it became quite clear that Anguilla was seceding from the union. It held a referendum to decide on independence. At this time, Anguilla was not only locked in conflict with St Kitts, which opposed its secession, but also with Britain, which did not want a colony back on its hands. In defiance at one point Anguilla declared itself a republic. Eventually, through the intervention of the United Nations, good sense prevailed and the British government toned down its position. In 1980 Anguilla officially reverted to being a colony (an associated state, this time) of Britain. In 1983 St Kitts and Nevis became an independent federation, provision being made in its constitution for Nevis to secede if it wished to do so in the future. Recently, a referendum in Nevis to decide on seceding from the union was only narrowly defeated.

status and labels. Independence marked the culmination of a long process of acculturation into British values and customs. Of interest to us is that, having gone through this process, we were not considered eligible to be British, but rather were graduated into independence. The French took a very different approach to decolonisation (see Box 1.4).

The 'Wider Caribbean'

Even though there are many 'Caribbeans', there are continuing efforts to demarcate a Wider Caribbean Region. We have mentioned the CBI and the ACS, which are largely economic responses to a globalised world well on the way to integration in huge alliances and blocs. Examples include the South American Common Market (Mercosur), the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA), and the EU. Having had a chequered history (see Chapter 12), CARICOM now encompasses the independent English-speaking countries of the Caribbean as well as Haiti and Suriname, and other countries such as Aruba have 'observer' status. The economic pressures which globalisation is bringing to the region should induce Caribbean countries to find a rationale for transcending the geographic, historic and political differences that have divided them in the past. Although a political entity called 'the Caribbean', with Caribbean citizens, may be a long way ahead, economic cooperation could change the configuration of the Caribbean in the not too distant future. In fact, the image of the Caribbean that is beginning to prevail, emanating from international agreements on trade and economic cooperation, is one of a Wider Caribbean Region.

SUMMARY

The issue of citizenship in the Caribbean is an explosive one and experiences vary markedly, from the Caribbean person born in Martinique who is French, to the Puerto Rican who is a US citizen but cannot vote in US elections, to British Overseas Citizens who are regarded quite differently from British citizens. History looms large in how political arrangements and citizenship were constructed across the Caribbean. This variety of independent, self-governing and associated states, colonies and dependent territories, existing as republics, parliamentary democracies, federations and even as an administrative department of a European country, or a communist enclave, attest to the fact that the 'political Caribbean' is a diverse entity – in other words there are 'many Caribbeans'. This is not surprising considering the

impact of the historical processes of colonialisation and decolonisation and their variety across the cultural/linguistic divide.

1.4

Caribbean diaspora and identity

In the previous section we discussed the 'many Caribbeans' largely in terms of the varied legacies of Europe in the Caribbean. To speak of a *Caribbean identity* against this background of diversity is an extremely complex undertaking, and some say that it may even be a figment of the imagination. At the same time, there is an equally strong view that, although the Caribbean is a region of marked diversity, there is much that is common to all territories. This is also true of the Caribbean **diaspora** in

A **diaspora** is a people or group of migrants who have a homeland in another part of the world to which they share an emotional attachment.

European metropolitan countries and in North America, and of those diasporas – Asian, African and Middle Eastern – that have grown up in the Caribbean itself. As well as a Caribbean identity, we may have to think about that of the diaspora and its implications for mainstream society, whether it is the East Indian or Middle Eastern diaspora in Caribbean countries or a Caribbean diaspora in host countries where migrants have taken their own culture and formed a *diasporic identity*.

A good way to start exploring this question of identity is with ourselves. How do we, as individuals, identify (or not) with the space where we live? Two views about how people form their identities with a place are given below and Activity 1.5 calls on you to reflect on your own thinking about who you are in the world. There are no right or wrong answers.

ACTIVITY 1.5

1. Critically analyse each of the views A and B below and assess how close it comes to your own understanding of yourself as a Caribbean person.
2. Suggest ideas that you think are relevant in forming an identity that may have been omitted in the two views reported.
3. Draw a labelled diagram that portrays how you think your identity as a Caribbean person was formed and is continuing to be formed.

- A.** *In constructing our identities as Caribbean people we emphasise (for some individuals this may mean excluding all others) our own nation-state first. This we strongly identify with, and moving outwards with somewhat less intensity we then identify with those Caribbean territories that are nearest to us and where our own language is spoken. Still moving outwards, we may then recognise other territories, such as the French or Dutch Caribbean, as part of what we identify as our region or the Wider Caribbean Region. If we are an English-speaking country which had a long French presence in the past, it is quite likely that we will feel an affinity with the French-speaking Caribbean before that of the Dutch or the Spanish. We may feel the least sense of belongingness with those countries on the periphery of the region, the Spanish mainland territories.*
- B.** *People develop a sense of place as they grow up in a particular locality. They identify with their immediate environs – their village or town – and the region around. They develop relationships to these places and people with whom they share a culture. These relationships are really connections, grounded in that place, to other people and other places, and describe how a person is socially located. For example, a person of Maroon descent in Jamaica today identifies with Jamaica and the Caribbean in ways that differ from someone in mainstream Jamaican society. He or she may feel more strongly rooted in Jamaica because of how his or her ancestors forged a lifestyle in defiance of the colonial overlords and won recognition by treaty to their lands. So that, within Jamaica, there are different Caribbean identities depending on connections and relationships.*

The first view suggests that because there are so many ‘Caribbeans’ confronting people, they are forced to construct their identity based on what is close and familiar first and then move outward. Thus, to make sense of the ‘many Caribbeans’, we as human beings need to focus on what is common and with which we readily identify in order to develop a sense of solidarity, loyalty and belongingness.

The second view seems similar to the first. It also refers to ways of building a sense of identity beginning with what is close and familiar and then moving outwards. However, it challenges the idea that in building a Caribbean identity we begin with a well-developed sense of the complexity of the region. For example, do we make decisions about our own sense of identity based on historical knowledge and the existence of the Dutch, Spanish and French ‘Caribbeans’? Do we necessarily identify with the labels that have been assigned to us – for example, our nationality – as our identity? We saw

in the previous section that a Caribbean person from the island of Martinique may not identify with France at all, despite being a French citizen, but with his or her Caribbean heritage. Similarly, an Amerindian growing up in the interior of Guyana may primarily identify with his or her own ethnic group rather than with Guyana. A nation-state is something that has been declared – it has political reality. For people, other realities and issues may be closer and more immediate and influence their sense of identity.

 **What percentage of the population of your territory is descended from these original European settlers? Reflect on the possible identity issues these Caribbean people may be facing today.**

Ethnicity

The discussion so far is leaning towards the notion that developing an identity with a place is perhaps more strongly influenced by the relationships and connections that you have learned about yourself and the people around you, rather than your nationality. This suggests that ethnicity looms large in developing an identity. ‘Ethnicity’ refers to your membership in cultural groups such as racial, religious, language, gender and even national groups. However, each may exert a different ‘pull’ on you in terms of how you would want to be described.

ACTIVITY 1.6

This is a private reflective exercise.

1. List all the ethnic groups to which you belong. Which ethnic group seems to be the most significant in identifying how you see yourself in the world?
2. Is there more than one type of ethnicity that you believe important in describing or explaining how you see yourself at this time? Identify those ethnic groups that seem to be most important in shaping your identity.

Trying to sort out how membership in different ethnic groups shapes the identity of others is also difficult. Think of the Maya in Belize, the whites of Cuba and Martinique, the mulattos of the Dominican Republic, the Rastafari of Jamaica, the Indians of Trinidad, the Carib community of Dominica, the Amerindians of Guyana, and the Bush Negroes of Suriname. Smaller but still significant communities are the Javanese in Suriname, the Portuguese in Guyana, the Chinese in Trinidad and Jamaica, and the Garifuna in Belize. In each case ethnicity

is very complex because of membership in a myriad of ethnic groups. For example, in Dominica the Caribs are also Dominicans and they may be Roman Catholic. How each Carib person constructs his or her sense of identity may or may not emphasise Carib heritage.

So far we have been exploring the bases of identity formation. We sought explanations in terms of ethnicity, which covers a wide range of identities, even one's nationality. However, we have not yet adequately tackled the question of 'Caribbean' in the formation of our identity. While we understand what we identify with and whom we identify with in terms of our own ethnicities, the discussion has been at a personal and local level. How do we make the leap towards our Caribbean identity? Activity 1.7 begins to focus on this issue.

ACTIVITY 1.7

This can be done as a class exercise or project.

1. Select a few persons from various walks of life – a fellow student, a housewife, a blue-collar and a white-collar worker, among others. Ask them the following question: If you had to describe your identity as a Caribbean person, what is the ONE thing that you would stress?
2. Summarise the main points and compare with the findings of class members.
3. Using all the data from class members, list the major perceptions of the issue. Also compile a list of minority opinions.
4. Critically analyse in class discussion what Caribbean people seem to understand about their Caribbean identity. How might this be different (or similar) for people of the Caribbean diaspora abroad?

Origins

The findings of Activity 1.7 should provide an interesting background to keep in mind as we continue to explore the term 'Caribbean identity'. Let us return to the ethnicity factor. Consider the point of view that ethnicity of any kind (e.g. race, religion, language and so on) has a dimension to it that is not only a personal or a shared group experience limited to one's region or territory, but could be part of a Caribbean-wide experience. For example, is a Jamaican Rastafari or Maroon wholly a product of being born and bred in Jamaica? Is there a way in which we can discuss such a person as having a Caribbean identity? To think of the Rastafari or any of the ethnic groups that were mentioned before, we need to go back to origins. All the people of the Caribbean are transplanted peoples, the exception being

the Amerindians. This is one commonality, whether the Europeans who initiated the transplanting were Dutch, French or otherwise. One common identifier throughout the Caribbean is that we have a 'homeland' in another place.

The diversity, then, could be said to begin here, in that once transplanted we developed differently in our different situations. So, from a common experience of European colonisation we developed institutions, languages, political systems and customs that reflected those of a specific coloniser. However, there continued to be commonalities. For example, African slavery was a common denominator whether it was experienced in Haiti, which threw it off as early as 1804, or in the British colonies, where it was abolished in 1834, or in the Spanish territories, where it persisted till 1888. The Europeans' need for labour also explains the presence of a diverse assortment of people in the Caribbean – Africans, Indians, Chinese, Portuguese, Madeirans, Javanese and even Europeans also came as labourers. Thus, the presence of various ethnicities in the Caribbean has a common root cause – these groups were brought here originally for a specific purpose. Even the Amerindians were not spared as they too were forced into the production machine of the Europeans. Since then the future of all these groups may have developed differently but the circumstances of their origins bind them together in an experience that is distinctly 'Caribbean'.

The responses by Caribbean people to slavery, indentureship and colonialism were very similar. Resistance, rebellion, revolution, resilience and independence were in evidence throughout the region. Syncretism, adaptation and hybrid forms were created as various cultures met and clashed. We see this today in languages, religions, education, politics, fashion and, among other things, cultural expressions such as art, craft, literature, music and dance. Cultural erasure, cultural retention and cultural renewal were experiences of all Caribbean people as they tried (and are still trying) to work out vexing questions of identity and culture (these concepts are discussed in Chapter 3). For example, a part of your Caribbean identity, whether you are an East Indian in Guyana, a Rastafari in Jamaica, or a Barbadian in Canada, is the problematic relationship that you have developed with your original culture and homeland. Whether you value it and continue to make links with it in a public and visual way, or whether you do not think much about it, describes how you have chosen to deal with a challenging issue of Caribbean identity. The debates that arise in Caribbean countries about an ethnic group being more loyal to a foreign country than

their Caribbean country of citizenship are outcomes of a colonial condition that goes back to the original purposes of bringing people here from all over the world.

Experiences that are Caribbean-wide, even though they played out differently in different countries, foster a Caribbean identity and culture. We all belong to a region where the great shapers of who we are were the processes of transplantation, forced labour and colonialism. We did not just acquiesce but resisted and applied resilient strategies. A culture of overcoming is part of our identity and culture. For example, the strong migration ethic in the Caribbean is a strategy for bettering our chances, something that preoccupied our forebears.

The Caribbean people of the diaspora also have a strong sense of this culture of overcoming. Many of them feel that they are not American, Canadian or British, even though they were born in those countries. Understanding their origins leads to high aspirations for success, and they often take advantage of the opportunities abroad to excel in education, sports, culture, health and business. For generations of Caribbean people, migration has meant an opportunity to achieve social mobility.

We have seen, however, that these relationships and connections were not something unique to us. Other people in the Caribbean were also engaged in doing the same thing. In each case these relationships and connections resulted from the common purposes and conditions that placed us in this region in the first place. Thus, as we were growing up and developing a sense of who we are (our identity), we were also developing our Caribbean identity. For some people the immense diversity in the Caribbean overshadows what is common. We have seen, though, that common origins and purposes are at the root of diverse responses. Thus, diversity results from specific differences in contexts and conditions, not any deep-seated divergence that makes it possible to say that there is nothing like a Caribbean identity – that it is merely a figment of some people's imagination. In summing up Caribbean identity and culture, then, we acknowledge the area as a culture sphere where a great deal of the manifest difference is but a complex working out of common themes – origins, purposes and processes.

ACTIVITY 1.8

1. Name TWO countries that are normally included in the Caribbean region but which are geographically or historically different from those in the British West Indies.
2. For ONE of these countries, examine THREE ways in which its sense of Caribbean identity has been constructed.
3. Look at the photographs on page 21. These were taken in certain Caribbean countries. Identify each country – some clues are given in the captions but you may need to do some further research as well.



SUMMARY

In this section we have explored the bases of how our Caribbean identity is constructed. We have looked at how our own identities developed through our location in a specific place and the relationships and connections we made, such as our membership in different ethnic groups.



Wrap Up

The chapter has presented an analysis of the location of the Caribbean region showing that 'location' changes according to the criteria used. A geographical concept of the Caribbean, for example, differs from that of a historical or geological understanding. The political Caribbean is a fragmented reality where a great many political models and varying understandings of citizenship coexist. The geographical, geological, historical and political Caribbeans each paint a picture of immense diversity. It is easy, therefore, to be sceptical about claims for the existence of something called Caribbean identity and culture. However, if we view the region and its diaspora as a culture sphere where the descendants of transported peoples are developing ways of life to assist them in overcoming the conditions of their origins, we can discern common patterns and themes.



Fig. 1.4 Creole women in Kotomisi dress



Fig. 1.5 River rafting is a growing tourist activity



Fig. 1.6 A remote but famous waterfall



Fig. 1.7 Goat racing

Research TOPICS

Conceptions of the Caribbean region in the mass media

Conducting well-conceptualised research is a necessary skill for students pursuing Caribbean Studies (see Module 3 for more on conducting research). Each chapter in this book gives you the chance to explore further ideas on the issues discussed by outlining possible research projects that you might want to take up. The following is suggested as a research topic based on the theme of the mass media but emphasising ideas related to locating and defining the Caribbean.

- a. Survey any form of the mass media that is available to you to describe and analyse what is presented as 'Caribbean' news or images. For example, you could count the number of stories on the Caribbean that appear over a certain period in a particular newspaper, categorising the type of story and

analysing the images. Then present the information using bar graphs, pie charts or tables. Your findings should give a good portrayal of 'the Caribbean' from that media source. You may want to compare different newspapers or even different media as you deepen the inquiry.

- b. Research what is occurring over the entire Caribbean, especially in countries that do not seem to appear very much in your initial survey, and suggest why such news is not considered newsworthy for your national media. Consider the implications of such a practice in your country.
- c. To balance the inquiry, if possible, interview media people to find out their perspectives on which Caribbean countries are reported on and which are not. If you do not have access to media persons, you may ask the people around you how they feel about the extent of news coverage given to the Caribbean, and consider the implications of what they have to say.

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Practice Tests

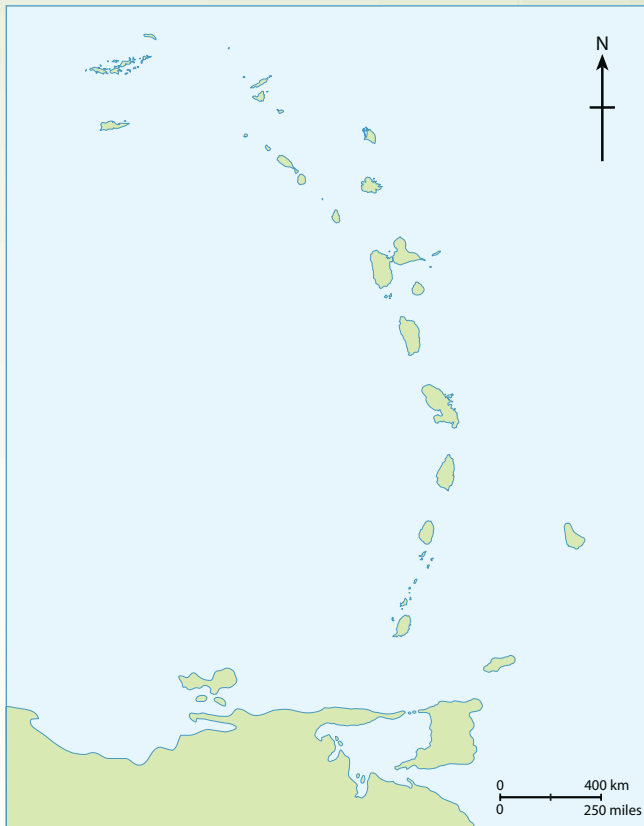
Structured response

(6 marks)

- 1 (a) Describe TWO ways in which an area such as the Caribbean region can be geographically located. (4 marks)
- (b) Give ONE exception to geographical location in the Caribbean and explain why it is an exception. (2 marks)
- 2 (a) On the blank map of the Eastern Caribbean opposite locate and label the following:

- (i) the subregion of the Windward Islands; (1 mark)
- (ii) the eastern margin of the Caribbean Plate; (1 mark)
- (iii) the islands of Antigua and Grenada. (2 marks)

- (b) To what extent can any of these features be described as being in the Atlantic Ocean rather than the Caribbean Sea? (2 marks)



- 3 (a)** Describe the attempts made by Britain to unite the islands of the Lesser Antilles as part of the process of decolonisation. (4 marks)
- (b)** State ONE argument for the continuation of the federation of St Kitts and Nevis. (2 marks)
- 4 (a)** Explain what is meant by each of the following:
- (i)** geological definition of the Caribbean region; (2 marks)
 - (ii)** historical definition of the Caribbean region. (2 marks)
- (b)** Why is Caribbean geology not usually used to identify the Caribbean region? (2 marks)
- 5 (a)** Briefly outline the idea of the Wider Caribbean. (2 marks)
- (b)** Suggest TWO reasons why, even with a common history and geography, Caribbean countries are marked by so much social and cultural diversity. (4 marks)

Essay questions (sections A and B, 20 marks)

- 1** Explain what criteria you would use in defining and locating the Caribbean as a region. To what extent is your choice of criteria influenced by your own territory's history?
- 2** Identify the geographical factors that may make it difficult for Caribbean people to develop a shared sense of identity. How may these problems be overcome?
- 3** For a country such as Belize or Guyana, examine the factors that facilitate and those that discourage the building of a sense of Caribbean identity.
- 4** Distinguish between the different political forms found within the British Caribbean. What implications does this variety have for relationships between these territories?
- 5** Assess the relationship between history and Caribbean identity in EITHER the Anglophone or the Francophone Caribbean.

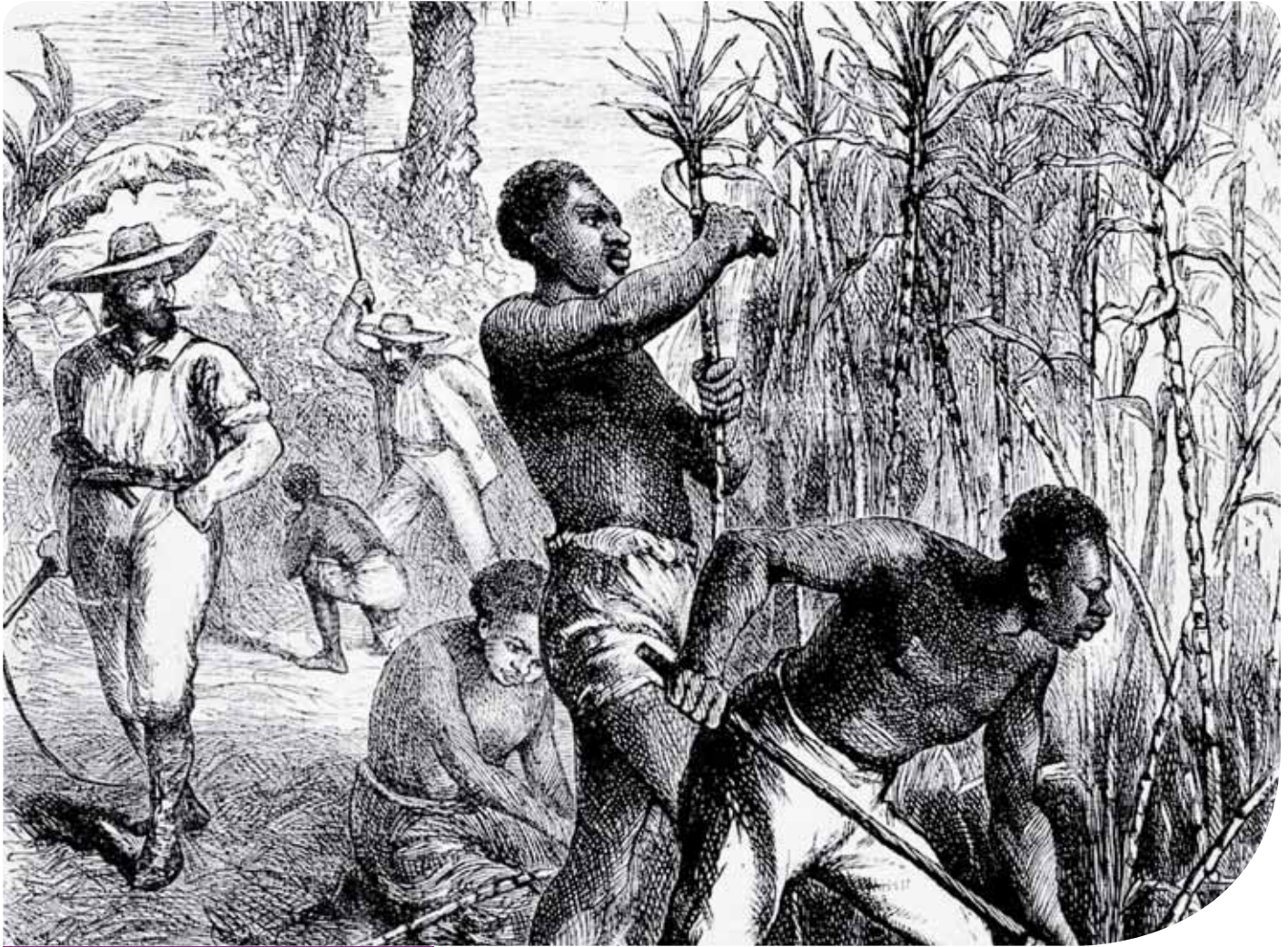
Essay questions (sections C and D, 30 marks)

- 1** Account for the conflicting conceptions of a place called 'the Caribbean' and present arguments for and against one such conception.
- 2** Describe what is meant by having 'a Caribbean identity' and show how and why that concept varies from place to place within the Caribbean and its diaspora.
- 3** Discuss the differing philosophies of colonialism of the British and French in terms of their respective ideas of acculturation, supremacy and citizenship.
- 4** Analyse the relationship between geography and identity, focusing on a named Caribbean country or territory.
- 5** Suggest why, even with a common history and geography, Caribbean countries are marked by so much social and cultural diversity.

Answers to Activity 1.4: 1(C), 2(H), 3(B), 4 (I), 5 (F), 6 (J), 7(E), 8 (D), 9(A), 10 (G).

2

The Historical Process



Slaves on a plantation (engraving)

The chapter begins with the earliest peoples in the Caribbean, people who have been virtually ignored in the historical account. It then moves through significant themes in the development of Caribbean society and culture – namely migration, economic systems, responses of people to oppression and genocide, and political and economic movements towards independence. The emphasis is not so much the retelling of history as analysing the significance of historical processes in Caribbean society and culture.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. describe the main historical events and processes in Caribbean history;
2. relate historical events and processes to contemporary Caribbean society and culture;
3. critically analyse traditional accounts of Caribbean history;
4. apply historical knowledge in describing diversity and complexity in Caribbean society and culture;
5. appreciate how a knowledge of history deepens an understanding of Caribbean social life.

2.1

Developing our notions of history

Until recently, much of Caribbean history was written by scholars with a distinctly **ethnocentric** outlook;

An **ethnocentric** outlook views history and current affairs from the point of view of one's own culture.

everything was judged by mainstream ideas in developed countries. Our historiography (the writing of our history) was heavily influenced by Eurocentric views, which meant that scholars thought of Caribbean history as beginning when Columbus arrived in the New World. However, as we saw in the previous chapter, our history is much older than that.

Today these Eurocentric views of what happened in the past have been repeatedly challenged by Caribbean scholars more sensitive to the notion that history is largely an interpretive exercise, greatly influenced by who is doing the interpreting. (In other words, history is written by the victors and rulers, as we said before!) Such insights are more likely to come from peoples who were colonised and are seeking ways of establishing their identity or identities. These scholars offer alternative explanations and analyses to those presented in the past, largely by the Europeans.

A major concern throughout this chapter relates to ethnocentric ideas that we have been taught as history and how they have influenced our understanding of the contemporary Caribbean. The chapter also attempts to dispel the notion that history is only about understanding the past and is of limited value in the here and now. The history of the Caribbean is closely related to present-day society and culture; in other words, the culture of our region and of individual countries has been profoundly affected by the *historical processes* through which they have passed.

2.2

Migrations

The movement of people from place to place also means the movement of society and culture, as well as their meeting and mixing with other societies and cultures. The great migrations that have occurred over the Earth's surface from time immemorial have always signalled fundamental changes and adaptations for both the migrants and the groups among whom they eventually settled. The Caribbean as a region has experienced a number of significant migrations, each impacting on social life, even as it is lived today. In this section the focus is on both the major movements of people into the Caribbean (immigration) and the establishment of Caribbean diasporic communities in other places (emigration).

The Caribbean has an ancient history, going back to the end of the last Ice Age (more than 10 000 years ago). During this time a number of different migratory movements brought a range of cultures to our region, beginning with the early Archaic peoples and continuing through to the Island Caribs and Tainos who were here at the time when Europeans arrived (often known as the time of Contact). Such waves of migration have continued throughout our history (see Fig. 2.1). So, Columbus was just one of many pioneers who 'discovered' the Caribbean through the ages.

2.2.1

Earliest Caribbean Migrations

As we have seen, a popular misconception about Caribbean history is that it is 'short' and that the society is 'relatively new'. These are ethnocentric ideas in that emphasis is given to Columbus and the influx of Europeans into the region, dating all that is significant in the Caribbean region from 1492 with the first voyage of

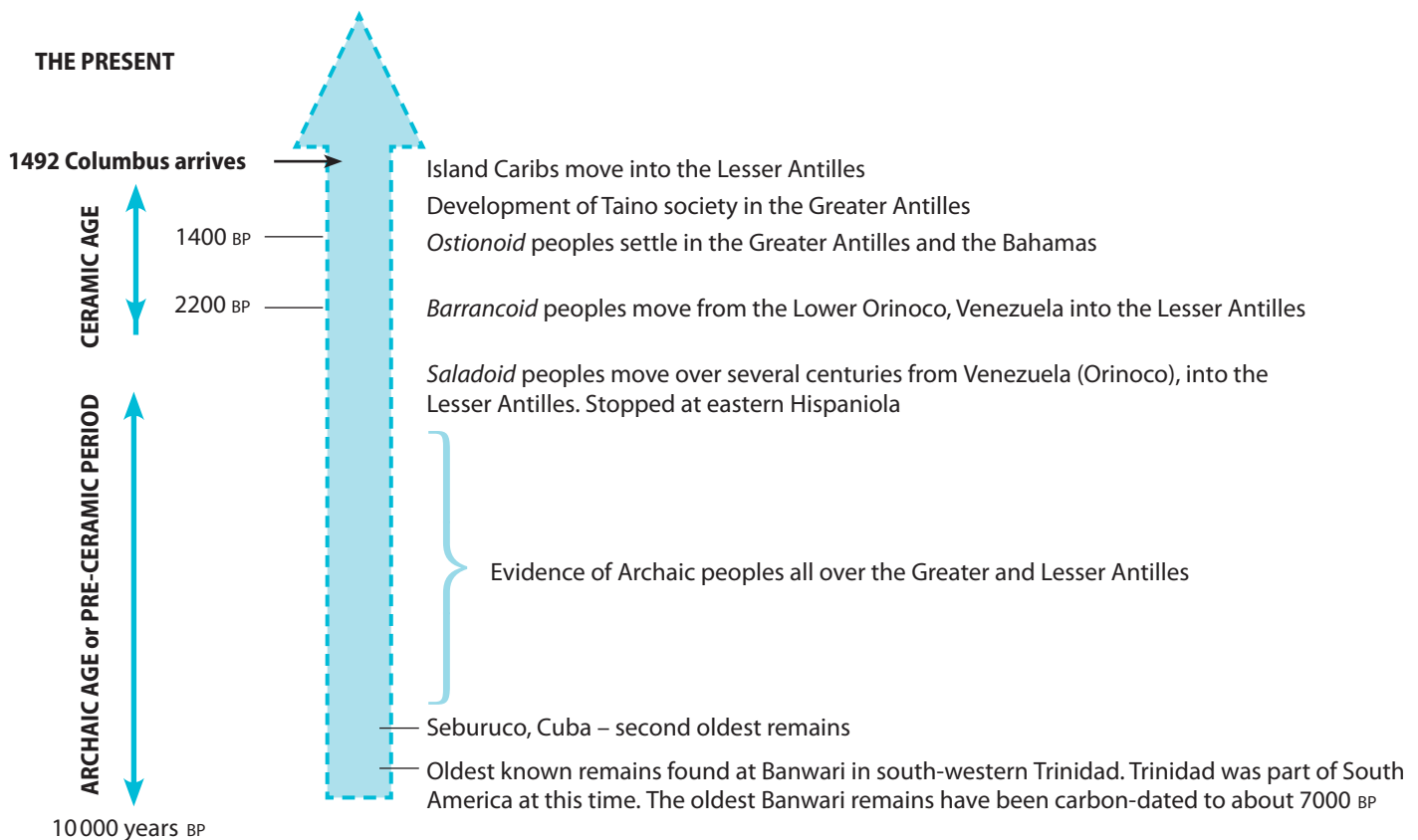


Fig. 2.1 The earliest migrations into the Caribbean (BP = before the present)

Columbus. Some attention has been given to Caribs and Arawaks but much of that account too is flawed, being informed largely by European interpretations of the life of native peoples.

A more accurate picture of the history of the Caribbean region must reverse these misconceptions. Fig. 2.1 shows that people inhabited the region over many millennia, dating from over 10 000 years BP. Today archaeology is revealing more of their lives and challenging many of the assumptions we have come to accept as Caribbean history. Consider the following ‘revisions’ of the popular history that we grew up learning.

- The fact that the earliest remains of Caribbean habitation are found in both Trinidad and Cuba suggests that migrations into the Caribbean were not just from south to north but that people also entered the region from Central America, and even Florida (Fig. 2.2). Most scholars believe that the original inhabitants of the American continents came from Asia at the end of the last Ice Age, when there was still a land bridge across the Bering Strait.
- These earliest Caribbean peoples, of the Archaic or Preceramic period (so called because they had not yet discovered the use of pottery), spread out and lived

in the Greater and Lesser Antilles for over 5000 years before other groups migrated into the region. Thus, the region already had a long history before Ceramic groups moved in around two and a half thousand years ago.

- From about 2400 years BP (i.e. about 350–400 BC) different cultural groups, distinguished by distinctive styles of pottery, ornamentation and lifestyles (occupations, diet, ceremonies, beliefs and practices) began to migrate from South America into the Lesser Antilles. They did not settle the islands chronologically from south to north, but bypassed some altogether. The Archaic peoples who were already there experienced acculturation into the Saladoid, Barrancoid and Ostionoid cultures (Box 2.1), showing that the meeting and mixing of peoples and cultures have been going on in the Caribbean for millennia. This is often called *hybridisation*.
- One aspect that has been understated in the historical record of life among these early peoples is the amount of contact and mobility they enjoyed. The Caribs’ use of the dugout canoe is well known, but it is also true that trade, for example, was long established between the early island dwellers and mainland communities.



Fig. 2.2 Early migratory routes into the Caribbean

It was not just a matter of migrant groups moving northwards into the Caribbean; they frequently backtracked, keeping in constant communication with suppliers of raw materials for pottery, ornaments

and various tools of stone, shell, coral and bone. The historical picture, then, is one of intense interaction between the people of the northern coast of South America and the Antilles.

BOX 2.1 Early Caribbean cultures

Europeans brought writing and the means whereby history could be recorded for posterity. But it is only through archaeological evidence that we can reconstruct the everyday lives of people of the earlier cultures. The labels 'Archaic', 'Saladoid', 'Barrancoid' and 'Ostionoid' are archaeological terms given to groups who shared similar styles of pottery, tools and implements, by which archaeologists place them at a particular level of organisation and development. All the knowledge we have of these peoples derives from what archaeologists can discern from artefacts of the material culture they left behind.

The Archaic or Preceramic peoples have left an extensive record throughout the Caribbean in their stone tools, implements and middens (rubbish heaps), showing that they were hunters, gatherers and consumers of shellfish. Fluctuating sea levels over thousands of years sometimes created shallow

expanses of sea conducive to the growth of shellfish. Archaeologists believe that the Caribbean provided an optimal environment for the growth and survival of these early migrants.

The Saladoid, Barrancoid and Ostionoid were more advanced cultures using pottery and cultivating manioc (cassava). Being experienced navigators, they traded between the islands and the mainland and probably had simple, egalitarian societies. Through acculturation they eventually developed into the highly organised chiefdoms of the Tainos, ruled over by *caciques*. The people of the Caribbean at the time of the Conquest by Spanish forces comprised the relatively advanced Taino societies, groups of Archaic peoples, other groups still at the Saladoid stage, and the most recent migrants, the Caribs. The Europeans used the terms 'Taino' and 'Carib' to include all these various groups.

- Historians used to write about ‘Amerindians’ as if they were (and are) a uniform group. It has been realised more recently, however, that hybridisation developed differently in different parts of the Caribbean, and these hybrid groups coexisted with Archaic peoples still living in large communities in western Cuba and remote parts of Hispaniola (where they were called Ciboneys) in 1492.
- The people of the Greater Antilles when the Europeans arrived were labelled ‘Arawak’. They spoke a language similar to that of the Arawaks of the Orinoco valley and Trinidad, people who are still found today in coastal Guyana and Suriname. However, these Arawaks did not regard themselves as allied with any ethnic group in South America. In fact, they did not even regard themselves as one uniform cultural group throughout the Greater Antilles. The people of the Greater Antilles did use the term ‘Taino’, though historians are unsure about exactly how they used it. Today we substitute ‘Taino’ for the previous label, ‘Arawak’.
- The Tainos evolved out of cultural mixing among the earlier peoples of the Greater Antilles; they did not come as a separate wave of migration. At the time of Contact they had developed a highly organised civilisation of chiefdoms governed by *caciques*, centred on city-states similar to those of the Maya and other mainland societies. In one grouping, Jaragua in Santo Domingo, the cacique, Behechio, had united many of the nearby chiefdoms into a confederation, which worked together to create a surplus economy (Chanlatte Baik, 2003). The Spaniards related in their accounts that these peoples were ‘simple, primitive and peace loving’. This interpretation by the Spanish dated from the fifteenth century, in the very earliest days of their encounter with the peoples of the Caribbean, yet this perception of the Taino remains among Caribbean people today.
- The last wave of migrants from South America before the Contact was that of the Island Caribs, so called to differentiate them from the present-day Caribs in Venezuela and the Guianas. The label ‘Carib’ was also created by the Spaniards. The Island Caribs spoke an Arawakan language (probably as a result of their relations with captured ‘Arawak’ women, since the children born of these liaisons spoke their mother’s language). By contrast, the Caribs of the mainland speak a Cariban language. The Island Caribs may have only entered the Caribbean a few hundred years before Columbus and were regarded as very different from

the Tainos. However, historians today see both groups as having evolved from a common Saladoid culture.

- The Spaniards represented the Tainos as ‘peaceful’ and the Caribs as ‘warlike cannibals’. However, the Tainos vigorously resisted their conquest and extermination by the Spaniards and even allied with the Caribs, as in 1511 in Puerto Rico, where they staged an uprising against Spanish rule. We might also turn the Spanish description around and characterise the Caribs as ‘daring, fearless and mighty warriors’. The charge of cannibalism is debated: while certain religious beliefs and customs may have called for rituals involving cannibalism, the Spaniards misunderstood and therefore distorted these religious practices in order to cast the Caribs as bestial and deserving of enslavement or annihilation. It is also argued by some historians that the Europeans needed slave labour to replace the dwindling Taino population and used the ‘myth of cannibalism’ as a justification for waging war on the Caribs, with the intention of subjugating them as slaves. In 1511 Bartolomé de Las Casas protested when Trinidad’s indigenous peoples were classified by the Spanish Crown as ‘Caribs’ for this very reason; yet many were enslaved and sent to Margarita to carry out pearl fishing.
- The Tainos were thought to have been completely wiped out in the Greater Antilles and the earlier inhabitants were believed to be long gone. Today, however, DNA evidence is throwing new light on our connections to our prehistory, as it is doing in every corner of the world (Box 2.2).

Patterns of early migration in the Caribbean show that the region has had a long history of settlement, much of which is unknown to school students. In our education system, emphasis is given to the study of the Caribs and Tainos, as these were the people living in the region when the Europeans arrived and about whom there is a written record. Archaeology helps us to discover more about the earlier inhabitants, but even with some of this knowledge already unearthed many Caribbean people still date our history to the advent of Europeans into the region. Diverse groups of Amerindians in the Caribbean today are aggressively trying to reverse this misconception by researching their own history, forming associations to publicise their lifestyles and that of their ancestors, and reminding us that they are the original inhabitants of these lands, still alive and well. For example, the Carib community of Dominica has staged canoe trips to Trinidad and Guyana to meet other Carib communities.

BOX 2.2 DNA and the historical record

Our DNA is found in the nucleus of our cells and we inherit it in equal parts from our mothers and fathers. However, mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) is not found in the nucleus of the cell with our DNA; it is found separately as an organelle. Recently it has been discovered that our mtDNA is inherited only from our mothers, and they inherit it intact from their own mothers, and so on, going back throughout history. Thus, the mtDNA within your body carries clues about your early maternal ancestors.

In 1990 a study of ancestral inheritance was conducted in Puerto Rico by genetic testing of a random sample of people. The results were startling in that 61 per cent of Puerto Ricans were shown to have mtDNA characteristic of Amerindians, while 27 per cent had mtDNA characteristic of Caucasians. Puerto Ricans usually regarded themselves as descended from the Spaniards, with some admixture of African and Amerindian heritage. While this may be true in terms of their DNA, governing how they look (their *phenotype* or

outward characteristics), their mtDNA shows their genetic history over many hundreds of years (their *genotype* or genetic make-up), and indicates that many of them were descended from Amerindians (Kearns, 2003).

This is interesting in that it shows the amount of **miscegenation** occurring in the early days of the

Miscegenation refers to sexual relations and therefore genetic mixing between different races.

Conquest. Amerindian mtDNA, too, will undoubtedly show the miscegenation which occurred between Archaic and Ceramic peoples and the Taino. The real significance of this is that much of our genetic ancestry may be hidden from us. We may have physical characteristics that tend to characterise us as belonging to an ethnic group – African, East Indian, Caucasian or a mixture – but our genetic record may show that we have had Amerindian ancestors.

ACTIVITY 2.1

1. Suggest how an Amerindian version of the 'Coming of the Europeans' would differ from the traditional account. Find out more about the events of the Conquest and write a diary or short history from the Amerindian point of view.
2. Reflect on what you learned about early Caribbean history as a younger student. How do you think that historical account influenced your understanding of Caribbean society and culture today?

2.2.2 European Migrations

Columbus may not have been the first European to visit the Americas (the early medieval Vikings explored the eastern seaboard around the tenth century AD) but he was the first to carry back tangible evidence of gold to show Their Catholic Majesties Ferdinand and Isabella, King and Queen of Spain. If Columbus had not found gold and precious stones it is unlikely that the Caribbean would have stirred up so much interest and expectation among Europeans. As soon as he returned to Spain after his first voyage of 1492, wave after wave of Spaniards came out to 'seek their fortunes'. Conquistadors and soldiers came to plunder, priests came to convert the 'heathen', and administrators came to organise society and arrange that the gold and silver of the 'Spanish Main' be delivered solely to Spain.

The fact that gold had been found on Hispaniola and that the island had a large resident population of Tainos suitable for conversion into slave labour made the island the first official administrative Spanish settlement in the Americas. Spanish migrants came to satisfy a lust for riches and in pursuit of it they made war on the Tainos, enslaved them, took their possessions, killed off their leaders and exploited the mines until the metals were exhausted. In addition, the indigenous peoples were vulnerable to all kinds of European diseases to which they had no immunity, increasing the death toll resulting from the presence of the Spaniards. At the end of the process few Tainos were left. The Spanish, more than any other European power, were responsible for the genocide of the native peoples of the Caribbean.

Iberian rivalry

The two nations of the Iberian Peninsula, Spain and Portugal, were both fairly advanced in exploration and navigation by 1492, when Columbus arrived in the New World. They were also rivals. Portugal's fifteenth-century explorations had mainly concerned Africa and the Indian Ocean. They were not interested in what they saw as possibly mythical lands across the ocean to the west, preferring to sail along the coastal waters of the African continent. Columbus was himself Portuguese, but his own country had refused to support his voyages

westwards across the Atlantic, which is why he had gone to the Spanish for funding. Now the Portuguese regretted their short-sightedness and wanted to make sure that they received their share of the gold that was streaming back from the Americas into the coffers of their Iberian rivals.

The Pope at the time, Alexander VI, fearing that rivalry and hostility between the two Iberian nations would erupt into war, decided on intervention, and this resulted in the Treaty of Tordesillas, which effectively apportioned control of the known (and unknown) world outside Europe between the two Iberian nations (see Box 2.3).

While the Iberian nations obeyed the Pope, the upstart Protestant countries of Britain and the Netherlands had no reason to do so; and France, though a Roman Catholic country, was wary of Roman authority in France in secular matters and not unaccustomed to flouting it. So the maritime nations of Europe – France, Britain and the Netherlands – ignored papal authority and instead chose to regard the Caribbean as fair game; they would encroach

on Spanish territory through whatever means came to hand – raids, piracy, smuggling, trade and later settlement.

Hispaniola, having been the first territory to be officially administered by Spain, soon became the established hub of a very large Spanish American empire, stretching from Mexico to Patagonia, and including the Caribbean (but excluding Brazil, see Box 2.3). The migrants who continued to come from Spain after the initial spate of explorers, adventurers, priests and conquistadors had ended came to settle, to become ranch- or estate-owners, or to get involved in the business and trading life of the new colonies. Many were royal officials sent to make sure that the business of the empire remained in Spanish hands. But Spain could not keep the ‘riches of the Indies’ a secret or monopolise it for very long. Indeed, the vast expanse of the empire made it impossible to patrol it effectively. The greed that spurred the first migrations of Spaniards now spread to all the capitals of Europe, where adventurers gathered prepared to take what they could from the Spanish.

BOX 2.3

Treaty of Tordesillas, 1495

The treaty drew an arbitrary line on the map of the Atlantic, 370 leagues (about 1300 miles or 2000 km) from the Cape Verde Islands, and decreed that any newly found territories west of this line would be considered Spanish territory and any to the east of it would go to the Portuguese. You can see from Fig. 2.3 that by this papal decree Portugal received the large territory of Brazil, making it today the only Portuguese-speaking country within Latin America.



Fig. 2.3 The Treaty of Tordesillas – dividing the New World

In histories of the Caribbean the Europeans have usually been treated as if they were a uniform group. A more sensitive reading of our own history will show that many of the differences among Caribbean nations today initially stemmed from the old hostilities and rivalries among European nations. It is important, then, to be aware of some of the differences between the various groups of Europeans and how they impacted on the Caribbean.

The Spanish stranglehold

For over a hundred years after Columbus claimed the Americas for Spain, no other European nation was able to establish a permanent settlement in the Caribbean. The British and French in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries came simply to raid, pillage and capture the rich Spanish galleons carrying gold and silver back to Spain, or to lay siege to and destroy Spanish settlements and steal their treasures. They were called 'buccaneers', 'privateers' and 'pirates' (Box 2.4), but they did not settle permanently.

The slave trade

At first enslaved Africans were provided for the trade solely by the Portuguese, since the Spanish were not

permitted to trade in Africa, but increasingly the Dutch, French and British began to be involved directly (see below). Portuguese fortunes waned in Africa when their forts and slaving connections were gradually usurped by these growing maritime powers of northern Europe. In turn, the Dutch, French and British each dominated the Atlantic slave trade from the sixteenth through to the nineteenth century, when it was abolished. No longer gold and silver but human cargo was now proving to be the way to profit from Spain's empire.

Smuggling was another means whereby all the European nations sought to encroach on the empire. Official holders of the *asiento* licence from the Spanish government (Box 2.6) could never satisfy the demand for slaves and other goods needed by the colonists. The Portuguese and Dutch, in particular, assisted Spanish colonists, as well as the British and French settlers who illegally occupied the Lesser Antilles, by providing them with smuggled goods and slaves.

British, French and Dutch settlement

Once the British and French managed to establish a permanent settlement in St Kitts (1624), European migrants spread quickly to Nevis, Antigua, Montserrat,

BOX 2.4 Challenging Spain: the Buccaneers

As soon as word filtered back to other European nations that Spain had come upon untold wealth and riches, nobleman, merchant and commoner alike vowed to have a share as well. Settlement was not yet a dominant idea; robbery was the most pressing concern. Throughout the sixteenth century, and for part of the seventeenth, Spain's empire in the New World was constantly harassed by privateers, buccaneers and pirates.

Buccaneers

Initially these were French runaways who lived a hand-to-mouth existence on Tortuga (off the north-west coast of Hispaniola) and nearby islands, killing wild pigs, and inventing the 'barbecue' in the process. (The French word *boucanier* means 'one who hunts wild pigs'.) Spain tried to dislodge them from the small islands on which they had settled, and many joined the ranks of privateers and pirates in revenge. The term 'buccaneer' has come into general use to describe privateers and pirates and all those who sought to rob Spain of its treasure in the Americas.

Privateers

French and British monarchs gave the captain of an armed ship the authority to patrol coastal areas to protect merchant vessels or to commit acts of reprisal against any ship or territory that was owned by a rival European nation. These privateers were given *letters of marque* by the monarch as their official permission to attack, loot and pillage enemy positions in the Americas. They were rewarded by a portion of the spoils. Famous English privateers included Sir Francis Drake and Sir Henry Morgan.

Pirates

These were groups of men who sailed the high seas generally to rob and plunder. Their attacks were usually directed at the heavily laden Spanish galleons en route to Spain with gold and silver, but they would attack any ship perceived to be the enemy of their country, or even a ship belonging to their own country if it was believed to be carrying valuable goods. Their main concern was to accumulate wealth for themselves, rather than having any patriotic intent. Blackbeard was one famous (or infamous) pirate who frequented the waters of the Bahamas.

Guadeloupe and Martinique. These islands were virtually ignored by the Spaniards, and the Amerindian populations were small and easily overcome.

It has been calculated that, in 1650, 56 900 Europeans lived in the British Caribbean and around 15 000 in the French and Dutch Antilles. This means that on average between 2000 and 3000 Europeans per year came into the Caribbean during the period 1624–1650. These regular, massive migrations from Europe created a drastic change from the previous situation: the sparsely populated Spanish Caribbean counted perhaps one European to 10 square miles; around 1650 the islands of the English Caribbean had become one of the heaviest-populated areas in the world, with more than 50 Europeans per square mile (Emmer, 1999, p 16).

Many of the colonies established by the French and British in the early seventeenth century were *proprietorships*. The European monarch gave to noblemen, highly favoured persons, or even companies, the sole right of settling and developing such colonies. These were the Lords Proprietors, who bore the expenses of the colony and in return taxed the profits of the colonists.

The Dutch settled on the Guiana coastlands and the small islands of Aruba, Curaçao, Bonaire, Sint Maarten, Saba and Sint Eustatius. They were less interested in agriculture, preferring to be traders, supplying the colonies with enslaved Africans and other goods. They used the islands as massive warehouses and places where slaves were kept en route to their final destination. Denmark settled St Thomas in 1672 and later St Croix and St John, while Sweden bought St Barth's from the French in 1784 and sold it back in 1878.

ACTIVITY 2.2

1. a. Analyse the rationale behind British, Dutch and French settlement of the islands of the Lesser Antilles.
- b. What made it possible for these European interlopers in the Spanish Empire to maintain control over these territories in the face of Spanish hostility?
2. Explain why Spanish settlers rather than northern Europeans settled in Cuba, Hispaniola and Puerto Rico.

Unlike the Spanish, the British, French and Dutch did not enslave the native populations. Instead, poor and unemployed persons from Europe came out as indentured or contracted labour for the tobacco farms before sugar cultivation became widespread.

Barriers

Whatever their nationality, Europeans first came to the Caribbean for economic gain. Spain attempted to prevent other Europeans from sharing in the riches of the Indies but was unsuccessful. After a turbulent period of piracy in the sixteenth century, Spain was unable to stop the flow of British, French and Dutch migrants who succeeded in establishing settlements in the Caribbean; these grew into substantial colonial societies. In a manner very similar to Spain in the fifteenth century, the British, French and Dutch tried to keep their colonies as separate and distinct entities. Communication and trade between colonies of the different European countries were discouraged through laws and regulations. Not only geographical borders separated the islands but political, linguistic and cultural barriers as well. By the close of the nineteenth century, the period of large-scale European migrations had come to an end, and the Caribbean was subdivided into enclaves owned by different European empires. Even today, in the twenty-first century, there is minimal interaction between the islands and territories of the French, British, Dutch and Spanish Caribbean. In each island a society and culture has developed heavily influenced by the European metropolitan country. Efforts at cooperation and regional integration across all these cultural groups are still proving to be very difficult.

2.2.3 Forced Migration of Africans

It is a matter of some considerable interest whether Africans came to the Americas long before Columbus (Box 2.5). We do know that Africans came with the first expedition of the Spanish as free men. While slavery had existed in Spain for centuries, slaves were of different races and ethnicities – Jews, Moors and Canary Islanders rather than Africans. Slavery had also existed in Africa long before the Europeans organised the infamous Atlantic slave trade. Yet the way in which Europeans eventually arranged the capture, transport, distribution and servitude of Africans in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries remains unprecedented in world history. The sheer numbers involved, the trade's economic basis as a capitalist enterprise, the unspeakable brutality, as well as the racial stereotyping that accompanied the Atlantic slave trade, involved a totally new understanding of slave trading and slavery.

In Europe and Africa people were enslaved for many different reasons – religious persecution, as captives of war, as payment, as part of a dowry – or they could be kidnapped and traded. In many cases there was little

BOX 2.5

Africans in the Caribbean before Columbus?

Some archaeological finds in central Mexico are difficult to explain without allowing for the possibility that Africans came to the Americas at different times long before Columbus. Ivan van Sertima, a world-renowned Guyanese historian, first put this theory forward in his 1976 book *They came before Columbus*. He proposed that Africans had made contact with the Americas as long ago as 3000 years BP and then again more recently in the twelfth century, when the Mandingo and Songhai went on long trading voyages. Other equally renowned scholars vigorously dispute these claims.

The Olmec civilisation of central Mexico is at the heart of the controversy. Fig. 2.4 shows an example of the huge stone sculptures that were carved by the Olmecs. To many they indicate unmistakably Negroid physical features. Olmec writing too bears close similarities to that of the Vai people of West Africa and the Mende of Sierra Leone. Their language is also somewhat similar to that of the Malinke-Bambara peoples of the Senegambia region of West Africa. Additionally, examination of some of the human skulls at Olmec sites shows similarities to skulls found in West Africa. And there continue to be the yet unexplained similarities of the calendars and pyramids of Egypt and those of the Aztec and Maya civilisations of Central America. However, all this 'evidence' is dismissed as only circumstantial by critics of van Sertima.

Alternative explanations put forward suggest that Africans may have been among the first peoples to enter the New World, when the continents were placed differently to how they are

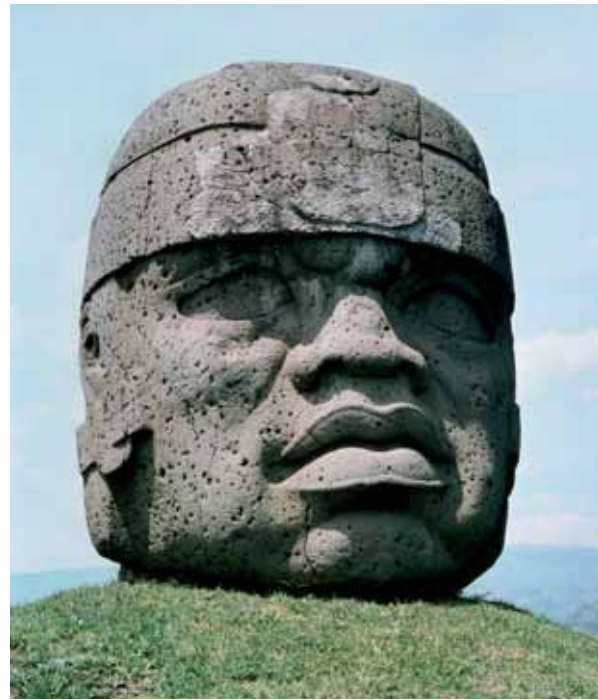


Fig. 2.4 An Olmec stone head

now (see Box 5.1). Hence, they have left some influences behind. At the moment, then, some scholars are willing to admit that the presence of Africans in the Americas before Columbus is not that far-fetched, but without the necessary archaeological evidence it can only be judged as a strong possibility.

difference in ethnicity between master and slave. Even in the organised systems of capture and distribution, such as the trans-Saharan caravan trade, the numbers involved were very small, and no country's economy depended wholly on enslaved labour. What made the Atlantic slave trade unique was not only the forced migration of millions of Africans into a lifetime of captivity and servitude, nor that it continued for centuries, nor that it supported an economy overseas that could only survive on enslaved labour, but that the foundation of this trade was based on race. 'Over time, whatever positive images that had also constituted a part of the perception of Africa and its peoples were filtered out and a full blown racist ideology emerged, particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries.' (Palmer, 1997, p 12)

The Atlantic slave trade

Enslaved Africans were imported into the Caribbean in small numbers from as early as 1503. By 1520 the Spanish Crown had given permission to import Africans as slaves to supplement the dwindling Taino population. According to the Treaty of Tordesillas (Box 2.3), Spain was not entitled to trade in Africa and therefore had to rely on the Portuguese for a supply of slaves. This was done by means of a licence, the *asiento* (see Box 2.6). The licensee bought slaves from Portuguese traders operating in Africa (who usually bought them initially from African slave traders) and sold them on to the Spanish mines and later the plantations in the New World. There was also a considerable amount of smuggling by those who had not bought a licence.

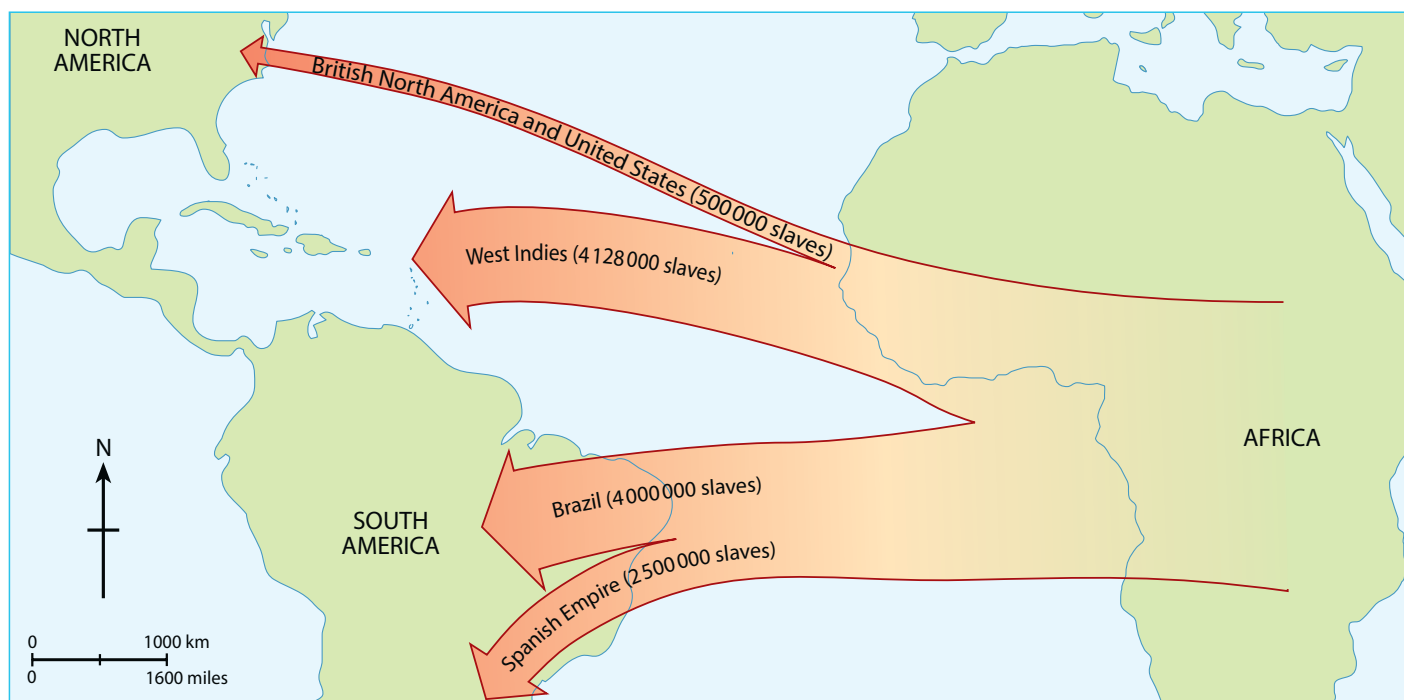


Fig. 2.5 The Atlantic slave trade

BOX 2.6

The *Asiento*

The *asiento*, a licence to sell slaves to Spanish industries and plantations in the New World, was first granted by the Spanish Crown in 1518. These licences were sold to the highest bidder, and there was intense competition for them. The provision of slaves under the *asiento* licence continued to be administered by the Spanish Crown until 1713, when under the terms of the agreement ending war between Britain and Spain the British government acquired the rights to grant the *asiento*. These rights were later sold to the South Sea Company, a group of London merchants formed specifically to sell merchandise to the Spanish colonies. At this time they contracted with the Spanish government to supply 4800 slaves every year for 30 years, paying the Spanish Crown the equivalent of 4s 6d (about £50 or US\$83 in today's values) for each slave (Bristol Slavery Collection, 1999). The number of slaves provided under this contract was, however, nowhere near enough to satisfy the demand.

Conservative estimates put the total numbers of Africans forcibly taken from Africa and sent to the Americas between 1500 and the mid-nineteenth century at 15 million (see Fig. 2.5). The organisation of the Atlantic slave trade illustrates how differently it developed compared with previous forms of slave trading or slavery.

Organisation

The trade was highly organised on a business footing. European merchants, banks and chartered companies put up the necessary capital to finance the undertaking, since a lone sea captain would be unlikely to be able to stand the costs of such a venture by himself or with a few partners. In the early days, however, some *merchant venturers* did take the risk, sometimes with spectacular results (see the case study of the English venturers in the time of Queen Elizabeth I (Box 2.7).

Like Elizabeth I, European rulers took an active role in the commercial aspects of the slave trade. They founded charter joint stock companies, of which the best known are the Royal African Company, the Company of Senegal (French) and the Dutch West India Company. These companies were given a monopoly to trade in slaves and other goods for certain time periods. They were responsible for defending their forts and warehouses in Africa and could harass other European traders on the African coast by capturing their merchandise.

BOX 2.7**English venturers
and the slave trade**

In October 1562 Queen Elizabeth I granted the seaman John Hawkins permission to sail to Guinea in West Africa with the express intention of acquiring slaves there to sell in the Spanish colonies in the New World. Hawkins gathered financial backing from men in England who had money to put into a promising venture. He was known as a seasoned trader with Spain, and one who planned his voyages carefully with profit in mind, and there was no shortage of backers to equip the three well-armed ships Hawkins had decided to take on the voyage.

For four months Hawkins and his companions 'gathered' almost 300 slaves in Africa. He stole some from the Portuguese slave traders – generally by raiding or capturing their ships along the coast and transferring the cargo to his own ships – and took others from the interior of the continent, with the help of rival tribes who were happy to profit from their enemies' capture.

In April 1563 he arrived in the West Indies and sold his enslaved African 'goods' at various ports in the island of Hispaniola. The profits were enormous, and he had to charter two extra vessels in order to transport home to England the volume of gold, silver, spices, sugar and precious stones that he had earned. His backers were impressed, and the Queen herself promised to provide one of her own ships for the second voyage.

Forts and castles

West Africa was integral to the operations of these companies. Each European country involved in the trade built forts at different points on the coast. The Portuguese built the massive fort at Elmina, which was captured by the Dutch in 1650, while in 1653 the Royal African Company built its fort at Cape Coast Castle on the Gold Coast, Ghana. (In Ghana many of these forts have been restored as historical sites.) The forts were used to store the merchandise brought from Europe for trading purposes – cloth, iron, weapons, trinkets and beads – and to house those Africans who were to be sold as slaves in the Americas. Europeans at the forts were also responsible for conducting delicate negotiations with African chiefs and their emissaries. Indeed, members of these chartered companies acted on behalf of their governments, offering

gifts and bribes to tribal chieftains who sometimes proved uncooperative. The forts had armed guards to ward off dissatisfied African traders and European rivals.

The Portuguese slave trade was mainly active along the Gold Coast (Fig. 2.6) and then shifted operations southwards to present-day Angola. The Dutch established forts and small settlements on the Gold Coast, the Slave Coast and the Ivory Coast. France's main areas of activity were present-day Benin, Senegal, Guinea, and later Angola as well as the Gold Coast. Each European country carved out a sphere of influence on the African coast and nurtured delicate relations with the tribal chieftains for the good of the trade but also to safeguard their own persons.



Fig. 2.6 The kingdoms and slave trading areas of West and Central Africa

Triangular trade

The slave trade has been termed the *triangular trade* because it had three branches or arms that formed a rough triangle when viewed on a map though this concept is now being challenged by historians. The three 'arms' of the trade are shown in Fig. 2.7.

The same ships were often used (suitably adapted for the different types of cargo) for each leg of the journey. Enslaved Africans were treated as commodities rather than as human beings (see Box 2.8).



The Middle Passage

Occasionally slaves escaped, when their ship sank close to shore in bad weather, or through poor maintenance, or more rarely when the slaves were able to use their advantage in numbers to overpower the crew, as happened with the *Clare* in 1729 (Wolfe, 2013) and the *Amistad* in 1839. Some took any opportunity to jump over the side of the ship, effectively committing suicide, rather than continue with a life of slavery. Others resisted their imprisonment, either by refusing to work or by refusing to eat, and they were often force-fed.

The loss of 15 million able-bodied citizens over more than three centuries, an estimated 2 per cent per year of the total population of West Africa (Manning, 2013), severely depleted the human resources of the region and led to economic stagnation.



Research mini-project

*Find out more about the successful slave revolt on either the *Clare* or the *Amistad*. (For the latter, the famous film is a good place to start, though this concentrates more on the legal arguments in a US court than on the actual events on the ship.) Write a carefully structured account of the revolt from the point of view of the slaves, and carry the story through to what happened to them afterwards. What historical lessons can we learn from these events?*

Impact of the slave trade on the Caribbean

The forced migration of millions of Africans to the Americas is the single most important historical process affecting the Caribbean today. It totally changed the demographic structure of the Caribbean. Caribbean societies became slave societies because of the sheer numbers of the enslaved in the society. They were not just societies where slaves existed; slavery became the basis for the economy and society. However, its impact affected Caribbean countries in different ways:

- The slave trade was directly tied to the need for labour. Thus, colonies where plantations were first established tended to develop large African populations before others. In the British, French and Dutch territories, the African segment of the population became dominant.
- The Spanish, on the other hand, were slow to introduce plantations into Cuba, Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo, and so over the centuries fewer Africans were imported. However, in the late nineteenth century they imported African slaves at a time when other European countries had already abolished the slave trade and slavery. For example, in 1750, while the enslaved population of St Domingue (present-day Haiti) was 164 859 and Jamaica's was 127 881, Cuba had only 28 760 slaves. Yet in 1880, just before abolition, Cuba had 199 094 slaves (Engerman and Higman, 1997), brought mainly by the Spanish, who had only recently become active slave traders.
- The British, French and Dutch abolished the slave trade and slavery before the Spanish did. In 1807 Britain abolished the slave trade; the Dutch followed suit in 1814 and France in 1818. Slavery itself was abolished by the British in 1834, by the French in 1848 (although slavery was briefly illegal in France during

the time of the Revolution) and by the Dutch in 1863. Slavery was finally abolished in Cuba in 1886.

- Although slavery was completely abolished by 1886, people of African descent do not comprise a majority in the Hispanic Caribbean. Cuba today is approximately 66 per cent white, 22 per cent mixed and 12 per cent black (the statistics vary by a few percentage points according to different ways of collecting the data). The majority of the people of Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic are mixed, mainly mulatto (African and white admixture).

◆ **Identify the arguments someone might use to show that the Atlantic slave trade was a racist enterprise. Do these arguments convince you?**

The diaspora

The forced migration of African peoples created a diaspora. This 'in-betweenity' (living in the Caribbean as the largest ethnic group, while at the same time having only a short history in the region and actually originating elsewhere) continues to impact on Caribbean society and culture as identity issues in many different ways.

We should be aware that in speaking of the Caribbean as an 'African' diaspora we are smoothing over all the ethnic differences of the people who were forcibly brought here. They did not identify themselves as African but as Wolof or Ewe, Mandingo or Ashanti. Thus, some of the cultural differences evident in Caribbean society and culture today are due to large numbers of people from the same African ethnic group being found only in certain islands. For example:

- The French traded a great deal in Dahomey (Benin) and supplied slaves mainly to their own colonies, so the strong influence of voodoo (Vodun) in Haiti is easy to understand; it is the official religion of Benin today.
- Most Africans taken to Cuba were of the Bantu peoples. The Bakongo, a Bantu group from northern Angola, practise a religion very similar to the Palo Monte found today in Cuba. And, although there were not as many Yoruba in Cuba, the religion they practised, Santería, is now widespread throughout that island.
- The Big Drum and Nation Dances in Carriacou, usually performed at Easter, are strongly associated with the Ibo and Koromanti of West Africa.

ACTIVITY 2.3

1. It is likely that you are a member of one (or more than one) of the diasporas affecting the Caribbean. If so, consider:
 - a. To what extent do you feel that acknowledging a homeland or homelands elsewhere affects the ties you may have to your Caribbean country?
 - b. What kind of ties do you have or would you like with your homeland or homelands?
2. Identify some cultural practices that are associated with your people's original homeland.

2.2.4 Migrations of Indentured Servants

Slavery was abolished in the British Caribbean over a period of time (1834–8, usually known as Emancipation). Some smaller territories became free overnight (for example, Antigua and the British Virgin Islands); others went through a compulsory transition period (termed Apprenticeship), ending in 1838. The crucial issues after Emancipation, confronting both Europeans and Africans, centred on the price of labour. How those issues were resolved fundamentally affected society and culture in the Caribbean.

In the smaller islands such as Antigua, St Kitts and Barbados, Africans had fewer options and so had to return to the plantations and accept the wages offered. In British Guiana (present-day Guyana) the ex-slaves could make a living by moving into the interior and becoming small farmers. Trinidad never developed into a classic slave society as slave imports took place mainly between the 1790s and 1806 (Brereton, 2002).

Europeans made the case that, especially in British Guiana and Trinidad, which had only recently become large-scale sugar producers, more labour was needed for expansion of the industry. In the transition years after Emancipation, Europeans were on the search for a reliable source of cheaper labour. Any new labour supply coming into Caribbean society and culture, however, was bound to encounter hostility from the Africans, who wanted wages increased. They felt that, while Europeans were making claims of a labour shortage, it was they who had created that shortage by refusing to pay Africans a fair wage.

'Indentureship' was an old idea brought back to solve the labour problems in the British West Indies. Indentured servants agreed to enter into a contract to work in the Caribbean for a period of five to seven or even ten years, for a minimum wage. Their outward passage would be

provided and they had the option of either accepting a return passage to their country of origin once the period of indentureship was completed or receiving a grant of land. Various experiments were tried. Europeans looked first to Europe, then to other Caribbean islands, Africa, India and China.

Experiments in indentured immigration

Europeans were first tried as indentured labourers to help 'whiten' the ethnic balance in the British West Indies. Between 1834 and 1846 several thousands of Portuguese came from the Azores and Madeira to Trinidad and British Guiana, while British and German immigrants went to Jamaica. The Lesser Antilles received much smaller numbers. However, the Europeans could not perform satisfactorily as manual labourers in tropical conditions and gradually drifted off the plantations into the towns, though the Portuguese were reasonably successful as shopkeepers.

Plantations in British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica then looked to the other islands of the British Caribbean, offering higher wages. By 1850 thousands of Africans had left Barbados and Grenada for Trinidad and British Guiana; Jamaica received several hundred. This internal migration heightened the labour shortage in the Eastern Caribbean, but it gradually declined when migrants realised that the wages were not much better than those they could have accepted at home.

A short-lived scheme was then introduced attracting indentured labour from West Africa, particularly Sierra Leone and Liberia. However, Africans did not seem interested in voluntarily migrating and the majority of Africans who entered the Caribbean as a labour force by the 1860s were those who had been liberated from ships still plying the slave trade. Since the British had abolished the trade in 1807 they had been policing the high seas to prevent other nations from bringing slaves into the New World. Very few of these liberated Africans were repatriated; instead they were dropped off in the British Caribbean to swell the labour supply. However, they too soon drifted off the plantations in search of other work.

In 1838 the experiment involving indentured labour from India began in a small way when 396 Indians arrived in Guyana. Europeans had no way of knowing that this was to be the only group to show signs of realising planter expectations and that the system would continue until 1917. They were trying several alternatives simultaneously, including recruiting Chinese labour from Canton and Hong Kong, mainly for British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica. When they too drifted off the plantations, as they found business and commerce

more suited to their talents, the planters focused exclusively on India.

In the Caribbean, particularly Guyana and Trinidad, which received the largest numbers of immigrant labourers from India, Indians have often been referred to as 'East Indians'. It is a local use of the term that sometimes confuses persons from outside the area. We can only suppose that it grew out of a desire to differentiate them from the native 'Indians' or Amerindians, who were not Indians at all, but a case of mistaken identity on the part of Columbus, who as we have seen had gone in search of a new route to India and the spice islands of the east. The Indies that he found were therefore called the West Indies, and the spice islands of Asia were known as the East Indies. That gives rise to the interesting fact that more than half the population of Guyana and Trinidad are East Indian West Indians!

India proved to be the most satisfactory source of labour, and in 1845 both Trinidad and Jamaica, following the lead of British Guiana, began importing Indian indentured labour. While immigrants came in small numbers from time to time to virtually all of the Caribbean territories (Fig. 2.9), immigration into British Guiana and Trinidad was heavy and continuous. By the time the experiment in Indian indentureship ended in 1917, approximately 239 000 had gone to British Guiana, 144 000 to Trinidad and 36 000 to Jamaica.

Indentureship and the plural society

The price of labour was the crucial factor governing the entry of Indians into Caribbean society and culture. They came from conditions of extreme poverty mainly in northern India – Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and various other parts of British India (Fig. 2.10) – and were willing to work for the small wage offered. The Africans did not trust people who accepted such poor conditions of work, and who thereby excluded the Africans

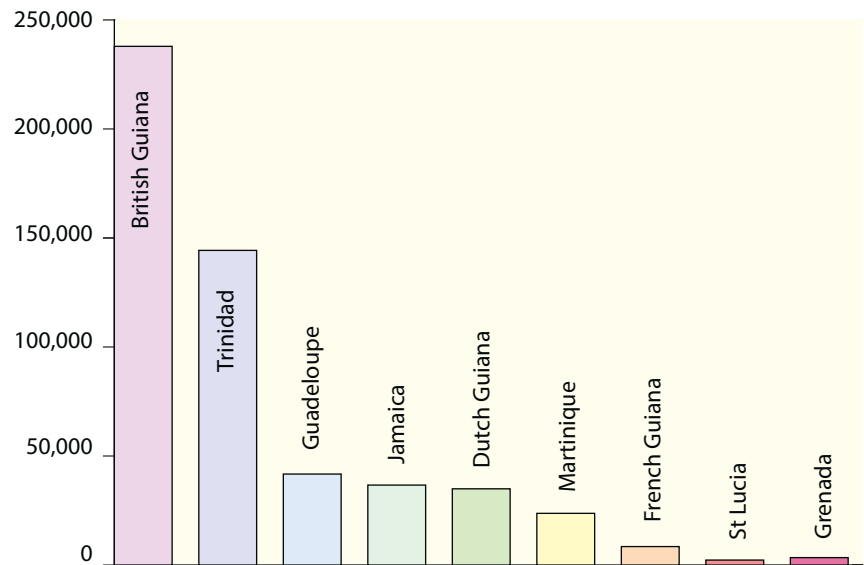


Fig. 2.9 Indentured immigrants to Caribbean countries



Fig. 2.10 Origins of Indian immigrants in the nineteenth century

themselves from making effective wage demands on the planters. The Indians, for their part, in an alien environment where their customs found disfavour, remained apart on the plantations.

Indentured migrants added to the diversity and complexity of Caribbean society and culture. Although the societies of the Caribbean are described as plural, the influx of indentured immigrants, particularly in Guyana, Trinidad and Suriname, created sizeable additional groups and subgroups, and the tensions among them go largely unresolved to this day, particularly in those countries where they form a significant proportion of the population (see Fig. 2.11).

Compared to the Indians, however, Chinese indentured immigrants readily assimilated into Caribbean society and many married African women and became Christian. There is a case study in Box 2.9 of the Chinese community in Santo Domingo (in the Dominican Republic).

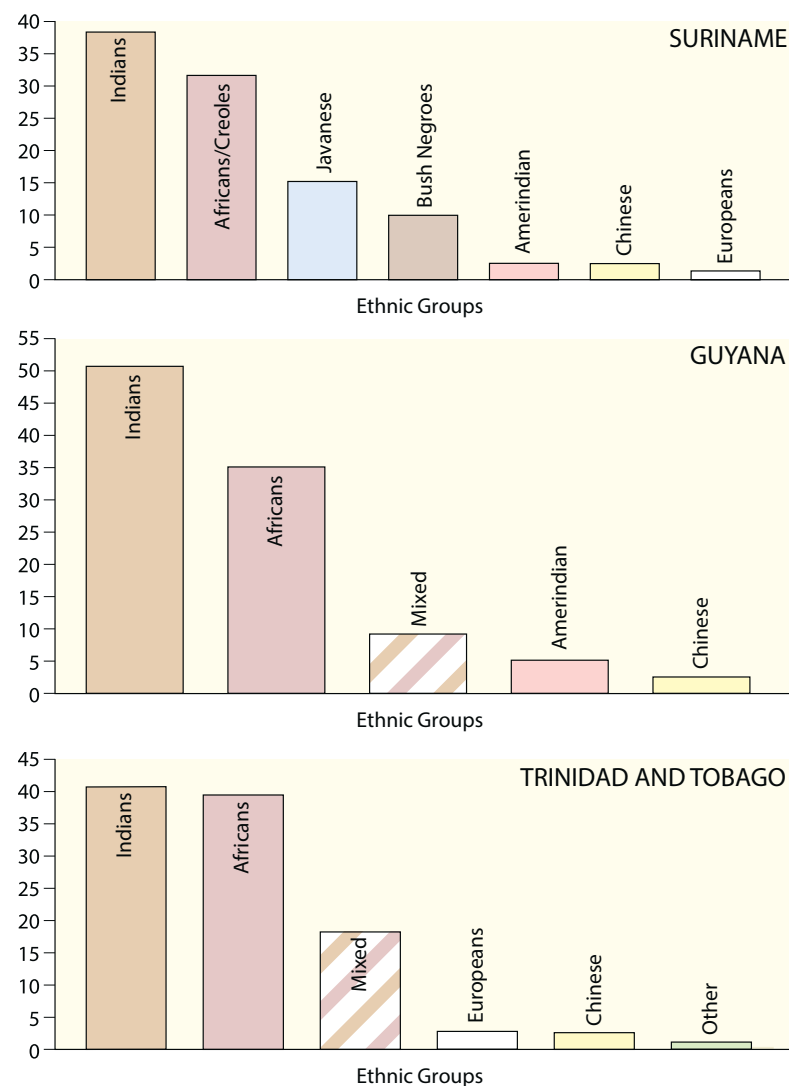


Fig. 2.11 Ethnic composition in selected Caribbean countries

BOX 2.9

The Chinese in Santo Domingo

Chinese migration to the Spanish half of the island of Hispaniola began occurring in the second half of the nineteenth century. By 1910 there were 32 Chinese residents, and shortly afterwards there was a large influx of Chinese immigrants from the United States, partly as a result of the US military domination of the country between 1916 and 1920. This doubled the Chinese population by 1919, according to the official government census. The following year the number had almost doubled again, to 103. The census records show that they were all men. By the 1950s there was a definite Chinatown in Santo Domingo, in the Duarte area, where many of the businesses were, and still are, owned by Chinese people. This diaspora, however, rather than retaining its cultural features, became acculturated to and integrated into

the mainstream culture of the Dominican Republic, and many of the Chinese men married local women. Some also converted to Christianity. In the late 1990s there was a further wave of immigration, and the Dominican community recognised the importance of the Chinese community in the country's heritage, and the contribution made by Chinese-origin citizens such as the table tennis players Nieves Xue Wu, Lian Quian and Lin Jun and the historians José Chez Checo and Mu Kien Adriana Sang. Visitors to Santo Domingo report, however, that there are few authentic Chinese restaurants or other businesses. The diasporic solution favoured by Santo Domingo's ethnic Chinese is thorough absorption into the culture of the host nation.

Source: <http://dr1.com/articles/chinese.shtml>, accessed 24 March 2014

◆ There is a complaint sometimes heard in Trinidad and Tobago that while it is acceptable to speak of Afro-Trinidadians, other groups are still referred to as 'Chinese', 'White' or 'Portuguese', even though they are also nationals. Discuss the issues that may be important here. Is there a similar situation in another Caribbean country that you may know about?

Indentured labourers outside the Anglophone Caribbean

After 1848, planters in the French Caribbean brought labourers from Pondicherry, a French colony in India (Fig. 2.10), to work in the cane fields. The Kali ceremony and other examples of Tamil or Madras culture (from South India) can still be found in Guadeloupe today.

The Dutch had an extensive empire in the East Indies and brought labourers from the island of Java to their colony Dutch Guiana (now Suriname). They also imported Indians from British India, who are referred to in Suriname today as 'Hindustanis' or East Indians. The Javanese comprise 15 per cent of Suriname's population and are mostly Muslim, while the 'Hindustanis', comprising about 37 per cent of the population, are mainly Hindus with a Muslim minority. However, Javanese and 'Hindustani' Muslims practise different traditions in Islam.

2.2.5 Caribbean Diaspora

In Caribbean society and culture migration has been a traditional practice and is regarded positively. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries many Caribbean emigrants, mainly from Jamaica and Barbados, went to Panama to find work on the canal that was being built across the peninsula. Although the regular work was attractive, there were many dangers attached to it, not to mention jungle diseases to which island migrants in particular were not accustomed. Afro-Caribbean workers were also subject to racist discrimination and abuse. But many workers sent money home to their families to enable them to join them in Panama, where a large diasporic community was founded. After the canal was finished, many workers found employment on the sugar plantations.

Today large numbers of Caribbean migrants and their children live and work in metropolitan countries and elsewhere. There is an important and vibrant Caribbean diasporic community in London, for example (see the case

study in Box 2.10), in other cities in the UK, and in France, The Netherlands and Canada, among other places.

It is a normal practice for Caribbean people to send home remittances to assist family members. These remittances also constitute a valuable source of foreign exchange for the home country, as they have done for decades. The phenomenon of migration has also helped Caribbean countries by lessening the pressure for jobs and social services locally (Richardson, 2004). However, migration can be seen as a negative approach to development and decolonisation. While the Caribbean cannot remove itself from the global economy, and would not want to deny its nationals job opportunities in metropolitan countries, these traditions make us vulnerable to the policies of extra-regional countries.

Over time Britain, Canada and the United States have moved to curb immigration from the Caribbean and have even stipulated their preference for highly educated and skilled persons. At the same time they have been forced to accept poor and unskilled or semi-skilled migrants on a seasonal basis because their own residents are unwilling to work at strenuous or low-status jobs. The labour shortage in farm work has given poor farmers and unemployed youth in the Caribbean and elsewhere an opportunity to earn an income in metropolitan countries. Caribbean people also migrate on a seasonal basis to perform domestic work, childcare and taking care of the elderly. While Caribbean countries have benefited from the temporary or permanent migration of their people, there have also been negative influences:

- the 'brain drain' effect through the emigration of skilled people, most of whom were trained by Caribbean institutions (e.g. nurses, teachers, technicians);
- the experience of racism in the metropolitan country and treatment as second-class citizens as far as wages, benefits and grievances are concerned;
- the injustices felt by seasonal workers, who are largely segregated from resident communities on large farms or orchards and who hold down jobs that residents think are too menial for them (see Box 2.11, page 43);
- the 'mindset' that better opportunities lie with extra-regional countries.

The migration experience today (particularly seasonal migration), while seemingly beneficial, continues the syndrome of dependency on extra-regional countries. Agricultural workers in poor communities have not been able to match these prices and have become further impoverished. It is these persons who are then recruited as seasonal farm labour in the developed world.

BOX 2.10

Case study: Caribbean diaspora in London

After the Second World War, Britain needed help to rebuild its industries and the capital itself after the heavy bombing. People from the Caribbean were offered special terms of citizenship and settlement rights in return for their willingness to work in London and other centres, and this was attractive to many. They arrived in their hundreds, and eventually thousands, on ships such as the *Empire Windrush*, with high hopes and a feeling that they were coming 'home' to the mother country about which they had heard so much and which now needed their help. There was a rude awakening, however, as they faced discrimination with regard to housing, where accommodation costs were high compared with the very low wages they earned in the jobs they were offered in London Transport and the National Health Service. When other areas of employment opened up to them later, trade unions and British workers often resented the immigrants' presence, since they feared this would undercut wages in their own jobs. Even the churches were unwelcoming. Worst of all, the immigrants and their families were subject to racial abuse, even in school.

Their response was to form close links with each other. Immigrants from different Caribbean

territories found common ground in the difficulties they faced. They used familiar self-help strategies such as Parnier to enable them to finance businesses and buy property. They set up their own newspapers, such as *The Voice*. They encouraged cultural gatherings that reminded them of the Caribbean, most famously in creating the Notting Hill Carnival, which has become a feature of mainstream London life, even becoming part of the Olympic cultural celebrations in 2012.

Today there are members of the Caribbean diaspora in all walks of London life, including business and even as Members of Parliament. The picture is not altogether rosy, however, since many Afro-Caribbean persons feel a sense of disadvantage. Many of the poorest communities in London have a large Afro-Caribbean component, and there is still an ambivalent attitude on the part of the police force, which led to riots in Brixton in the 1980s and more recently in north London in August 2011. But many people of Caribbean origin are second- or third-generation migrants and think of themselves as British, even if they value their Caribbean cultural heritage.



Fig. 2.12 The arrival of the *Empire Windrush*

BOX 2.11 Caribbean migrant farm labour

The sugar cane fields of southern Florida and the extensive orchards of the Niagara Peninsula in Canada see an annual migration of Caribbean workers to hand-pick fruit, harvest cane manually and work in tobacco factories and canneries. The field labour is hard, backbreaking work, from sunup to sundown, without overtime pay. While many come back year after year and do not seem to mind the deprivations, they are housed in substandard structures, receive the minimum of medical and other treatment, live apart from the general population, and are speedily returned to the Caribbean if there are any disputes or disagreements about the work or their contracts.

Their recruitment in the Caribbean is based on agreements between the governments of the Caribbean and the receiving nations. Their air fares are paid for by the farmers and the contract may be from six weeks to eight months, depending on the type of job for which they are contracted. They are returned promptly to the Caribbean once their contracts expire. They are paid a lowly wage by

Canadian or American standards, but it represents a substantial sum in Caribbean currency. However, most migrants spend much of it on the eve of their departure in September, buying different kinds of small appliances and gadgets, clothes and gifts.

Although these migrant labour schemes involve thousands of Caribbean workers, mainly from Jamaica, with smaller numbers from the Eastern Caribbean, they are not covered by health and safety legislation, nor can they bargain collectively. They cannot move from one farm to another looking for better conditions either. There is a social distance between the workers and the farmers and townspeople, emphasised by race and colour. In short, it is an exploitative system similar to those previously imposed by Europeans under the plantation system. The farmers counter these charges by saying that they too have to be competitive in a system of trade liberalisation and so the cheaper their production costs, the more likely they are to stay in business.

**SUMMARY**

The Caribbean has been a destination for migrants over many thousands of years. Each group has contributed to the creation of Caribbean society and culture. Migrants came through normal processes of diffusion and expansion of cultures, through voyages intent on discovering new trade routes, as well as through force by being enslaved, and through worker indentureship schemes. Each group added to the increasing diversity of Caribbean society and culture, especially as each group impacted on the various territories differently. Today both diversity and complexity deepen as we see the resurgence of groups thought to have long died out, namely the Amerindians, with a demand to be recognised as a vibrant part of Caribbean society and culture. And we also see Africans, Indians, Chinese and whites not only as Caribbean people, but also as part of the various diasporas, having homelands elsewhere and learning to forge an identity under such circumstances. The complexity deepens considerably when Caribbean people migrate to metropolitan countries and live in 'a double diaspora'.

2.3**The development of systems of production**

Early societies had simple **systems of production** such

A **system of production** refers to the ways in which an economy is organised to produce commodities to sustain society.

as hunting and gathering or subsistence agriculture. Once surpluses occurred, trade became important. Amerindian societies were at different stages of economic organisation when the Europeans arrived in the Americas. The Tainos, the most advanced, were producing agricultural surpluses and trade was mostly for the purpose of feeding and providing for the wants of their increasingly urban communities. The Spaniards, however, introduced the idea that wealth in the form of gold and silver (bullion) was the desired goal of production. They believed that if Spain had access to its own gold and silver mines, then it would be the most powerful country in Europe. Thus, the main driving force behind Spain's colonisation of the Americas was the lure of precious metals.

2.3.1 Slash and Burn Cultivation

Subsistence agriculture works well where there is sufficient land to maintain fertility. One of the methods of returning nutrients to the soil in traditional societies, including those in the Caribbean, is called slash and burn cultivation. The steps involved are shown in Fig. 2.13.

Used along with a **fallow system** this method of cultivation was (and is) sustainable. However, as

In a **fallow system** at least once every two years the ground is left to recover nutrients naturally, often being grazed by animals whose manure fertilises the soil, followed by another session of slash and burn.

populations grow, the pressure on the land to produce more crops causes the soil fertility to fall, especially if it is overgrazed as well as being overused for crops. This is why if used today it is usually seen as poor management of soil fertility.

2.3.2 Encomienda

When Spain conquered the peoples of the Caribbean, the Spanish monarchs decided that control over the native population should be divided up among the incoming Spaniards, who had the right to exact from them some form of tribute – produce, gold or personal services. In return, the Spaniards would guarantee religious instruction in the Roman Catholic faith. This system was known as the *encomienda*. In reality, the Amerindians were treated as slaves and put to work in the mines. They

quickly died from hunger, overwork, harsh punishments and European diseases. Many committed suicide. The system of production was a get-rich-quick scheme where precious metals were taken from a conquered people by forced labour and sent to Spain to increase Spain's power and prestige in Europe. The legacy of the religious training that Amerindians were given in return has meant that many members of indigenous groups in the Caribbean today still follow the Roman Catholic faith.

2.3.3 Slavery

As we have already seen, African slavery was then introduced throughout the Americas. Other Europeans had begun to encroach on Spain's empire, settling territories they had captured such as Jamaica and the western part of Hispaniola, or islands of little importance to Spain, such as the Lesser Antilles. In the British, French and Dutch Caribbean, slavery as a system of production was primarily bound up with the cultivation of sugar and the social and economic organisation of the plantation.

Slavery was a **total institution**. Slavery imposed

A **total institution** determines all aspects of life, social, economic and political.

institutional organisation on the lives of African people, including the social and economic arrangements of the plantation and, by extension, the society. Slavery formed the basis of plantation society (§2.3.4) and this was the system of production in the Caribbean associated with

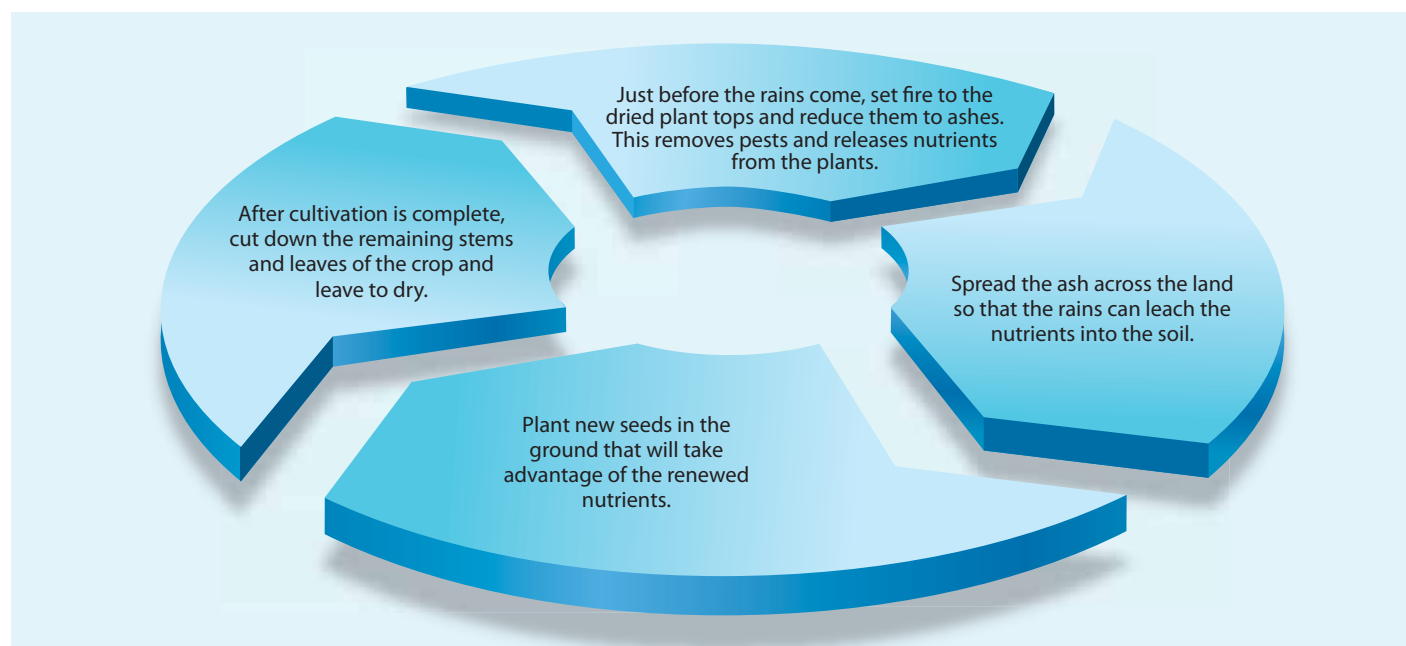


Fig. 2.13 Slash and burn cultivation

sugar cultivation. One fundamental way in which slavery shaped the lives of Africans was through attempts to dehumanise them. Africans were regarded as ‘chattels’ (property like land or buildings) and were thus owned by Europeans who had paid for them. This attempt at dehumanisation involved suppressing the social and cultural ties which helped to form an identity and a sense of belonging. For example:

- Choosing Africans from different tribal groups for the plantations to minimise communication and bonds of kinship between them was based on a fear of Africans banding together.
- Giving the Africans European names and forbidding them to practise their religions, customs and traditions, so that any semblance of social and family life was discouraged, was also based on a fear of developing solidarity and identity.
- Meting out harsh physical punishments, torture, and even death, for quite minor infringements, was designed to force Africans to submit to the will of the Europeans.
- Playing one group of Africans against another was meant to promote European values and ways of life. For example, the domestic or house slaves and lighter-skinned, partly European slaves were accorded higher status and prestige because of their constant and intimate contact with Europeans.
- Rigidly stratifying the society according to race and colour, which involved relegating black people to the bottom of the social strata, was dehumanising, not least because the very characteristics identifying Africans as a race were the same ones that identified them as slaves, and therefore the property of others.

2.3.4 The Plantation System

The plantation was a system of production that Europeans devised to maximise the profits in certain types of agricultural business. In the Caribbean it was mainly used for the production of sugar, but in mainland America there were cotton plantations, and in European colonies in other places in the world, mainly in Africa and the Far East, coffee and tea plantation systems were also used.

European governments brought different ethnic groups to live and work on plantations far from their homelands; these groups were encouraged to distrust each other; and they were encouraged to look on the Europeans as superior. Labour was coloured and the whites were the owners, managers and supervisors. When coupled with slavery as a total institution the plantation system became a sophisticated economic mechanism that dominated the culture and society of the Caribbean,

locking it into European economies. For example, the plantation system:

- relied on the Atlantic slave trade for its labour supply and provided the raw materials for the third leg of the triangular trade – sugar, rum and molasses for the port cities of England, France and Holland;
- provided the basis for the growing manufacturing and industrial strength of Europe (plantations were a form of investment financed from the capitals of Europe);
- was so valuable that in 1651 Britain instituted the Navigation Laws whereby only English ships could trade with English colonies, and this prevented other nations from getting a share of the profitable trade arising from the slave plantations of the Caribbean; France followed in 1664 with similar laws.

The legacy of the plantation system continues to affect Caribbean societies and economies today. George Beckford (1972), for example, portrayed Caribbean society as ‘plantation society’, although the era of the large plantations dominating economic and social life is long gone. His work focused on the legacy of slavery and indentureship and the system of economic organisation, the plantation, which used this form of labour. To him the most significant characteristic of Caribbean society today is its stratified nature, which in his analysis continues to reflect the historical divisions among the various groups where caste (race and colour) and class (occupation) were rigidly tied.

Whites and people of lighter colour were the wealthier members of plantation societies and they continue to be so today, although other groups – blacks, those of mixed heritage and Indians – are increasingly accessing social mobility, mainly through education.

ACTIVITY 2.4

1. List some of the social and economic effects that the plantation system may have had that still influence present-day society and culture in the Caribbean.
2. Some persons believe that to use slavery as an argument for some of the problems/issues still being faced by Caribbean people is merely an excuse, since slavery ended long ago. Identify some of those problems/issues.

Europeans brought systems of production to the Caribbean that began to take the shape of capitalist enterprises. The emphasis lay in amassing huge profits that were repatriated to the metropolitan country. The basis of such wealth depended on the enslavement of

people who, for the purpose of profit and prosperity, were regarded as subhuman. Values stressing exploitation of the environment and people for economic gain and an ideology of European superiority became part of the system of production.

2.3.5 Indentureship

After Emancipation, the planters sought a reliable source of labour, particularly in the larger territories where the ex-slaves refused to work for what they regarded as very low wages. The system of production in the British, French and Dutch Caribbean was thus thrown into jeopardy. Indentureship has been described as another form of slavery, though the Indian and Chinese immigrants were not regarded as chattels and they continued to practise their religions, speak their languages and maintain their traditions as best they could. But they were paid extremely low wages and their accommodation was crowded, substandard and unsanitary. They were always in debt to the company store where they were forced to buy goods. In addition, they were assigned to a plantation or estate and not allowed to move about freely. If caught some distance from the plantation to which they had been assigned they were charged with vagrancy, flogged and jailed. If they tried to escape they were hunted down and jailed for breach of contract, then returned to the plantation. For minor offences they were charged exorbitant fines. Many died from poor nutrition and they suffered from malaria, yaws, typhoid and dysentery. They were in a continual state of poor health and the rate of suicide was high.

As a system of production, indentureship was very much related to African slavery and, indeed, plantation society survived because of this new supply of labour. The socioeconomic influences of the plantation still pervaded the whole society even though some Africans had opted to move away. For example, the Indians were a non-white group of labourers who now occupied the lowest stratum of the society and were expected to see the European bosses as superior. They were also encouraged to keep themselves apart from the Africans, thus continuing disunity among workers. Although a new group had entered Caribbean society, the system of production – the plantation – continued to influence social and economic affairs in the same way.

However, times had changed. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Caribbean plantations were no longer as important to European economies because the latter now had worldwide empires at their disposal. In addition, the sugar plantations had to contend with cheaper sugar produced by larger producers, some of them

still using slave labour – notably Brazil and Cuba. When the nationalist movement in India brought pressure to bear on the British authorities who were in control of India at this time to discontinue immigration schemes because they were dissatisfied with how their nationals were treated, the British ended indentureship in 1917. (The Chinese government had ended indentureship in 1885 for similar reasons.)

Some Caribbean scholars have described the impact of systems of production by pointing out that elsewhere, e.g. in colonial New England, a society was developed with strong and vibrant institutions. Here in the Caribbean, though, the economy developed society. Explain your understanding of this interpretation of Caribbean society and culture.

As a system of production Indian indentureship undoubtedly saved the sugar plantations in the British, French and Dutch Caribbean in the aftermath of Emancipation. The very low wages labourers were paid exploited the labour force and enabled the plantations to survive through some turbulent times when the price of sugar on the world market was falling. However, the long association with enslaved and indentured labour predisposed Caribbean planters into a preference for exploitative systems of production. In the twentieth century, the number of plantations quickly decreased as the planters found that they could not survive by paying a fair wage. In addition, the reliance on forced and indentured labour had created a mindset that refused to implement labour-saving techniques and cost-effective technologies. The cost of production in Caribbean territories was thus very high and this legacy was bequeathed to Caribbean societies struggling with independence and self-determination later on in the century.



SUMMARY

The systems of production established by Europeans in the Caribbean have continued mainly intact, even though centuries have passed since they were first introduced. While the encomienda system, slavery and indentureship were all eventually abolished, the plantation is still seen as the main organiser of society and culture in the Caribbean. The plantation is a synonym now for highly stratified, ex-colonial societies where labour was brought in and now forms rival groups, in an economy that is still largely based on monocultural (one main product)

exports. Europeans did not develop the economic institutions of Caribbean societies. Their emphasis was on producing agricultural products by *monoculture* and exporting the raw materials to Europe to be manufactured. Today, Caribbean societies continue to struggle with systems of production that are not geared towards developing a vibrant, indigenous manufacturing sector and food production.

2.4

Resistance

Since the coming of the Europeans the history of the Caribbean has been steeped in violence and genocide. This oppression is a direct outcome of the systems of production that were established for economic gain – *encomienda*, slavery and indentureship. While it may seem that the European will prevailed – witness the divisions of the French, British, Dutch and Spanish Caribbean today – this was achieved only amidst continuous wars, rebellions, revolution, maroonage and other more subtle forms of resistance. It is a common belief that because plantation society was organised to maintain the Amerindians and Africans in an inferior position, where not only prevailing attitudes but the actual laws of the country kept them powerless and vulnerable, they were mostly resigned to accepting their lot. This is borne out by the fact that while Amerindians and Africans far outnumbered the whites at all times, they were not successful in overthrowing them.

This is a traditional version of Caribbean history. It is an account that usually refers to the Africans as ‘slaves’, whereas more sensitive renderings today acknowledge that Africans did not think of themselves as slaves but as people who were enslaved by others. What we have had as ‘history’ is an edited account that gave us the European perspective of events. This distinction between slaves and the enslaved helps us to gain some alternative insights into the nature of the resistance from the captive peoples’ point of view. In fact, they resisted the oppression by any means possible.

2.4.1 The Native Peoples

The Tainos

The coming of the Europeans with their weapons of iron and steel, and their tracker dogs and horses, was an unprecedented experience for the native peoples. Yet

almost from the inception of the Spanish invasion they resisted the newcomers. The people, described by the Spaniards themselves as ‘peaceful’ and ‘gentle’, realising that they were facing genocide, were roused into open warfare. The earliest account dates from 1493, when they killed the men that Columbus had left at La Navidad in Hispaniola because of their ill-treatment of native women. A series of conflicts continued throughout the Spanish occupation of the Greater Antilles and their imposition of the *encomienda*. Important native leaders in the struggle were the *caciques*, such as Guarionex in Hispaniola, Hatuey in Cuba and Agueybana in Puerto Rico.

Although the Spaniards had superior military might, their conquest of the Greater Antilles was not easy. By 1503 they had put down most of the active rebellions in Hispaniola, but considering their advantage of advanced weapons technology this represented a comparatively long struggle. It was not until 1513 that the Spaniards actually won the war for possession of Puerto Rico, and as late as 1520 they were still fighting a guerrilla war in Cuba. Apart from open warfare, the Tainos also resisted the Spaniards by running away and withdrawing from settled areas so that the *encomienda* could not be enforced. They also resorted to sabotage and suicide.

The fierce resistance put up by the Tainos, a people at a relatively early form of technological development compared with the Spaniards, is hardly mentioned in the historical record. The Caribs are more likely to be mentioned in this regard, emphasising the European myth that the inhabitants of the Greater Antilles were ‘peaceful’ and the Caribs were ‘warlike’. Our history texts do not dwell on the heroes and heroines, tragic though they might be, the *caciques* and *cacicas*, who first engaged the Spaniards, yet we are well acquainted with Columbus, his brother Diego, Ponce de Leon, Magellan, Ovando, Las Casas and so on.

Perhaps one way we can resist this ethnocentric version of Caribbean history today is to tell these tales and write about them in textbooks and storybooks where young Caribbean children will learn not only about the exploits of male *caciques*, but also those of the powerful Anacona in Hispaniola, and other *cacicas*. Millions of people who inhabited the Greater Antilles at the time of the Conquest should not be rendered silent by history. In this way, and others, resistance continues as a theme in Caribbean society and culture.

The Caribs

The Caribs of the Lesser Antilles met the Spaniards’ offensive with implacable resistance. Their tactical

responses were well suited to the mountainous terrain of their islands, where they could engage in protracted guerrilla warfare indefinitely. Their social organisation permitted flexibility as they did not have a traditional noble line with hereditary power; instead leadership resided in the best warriors. They were highly mobile, the dugout canoe especially enabling them to elude capture time and time again. Very soon the Spaniards left them alone, believing it was too much trouble defending islands where no gold was to be found.

However, the Caribs had to deal with those interlopers in Spain's empire, the British, French and Dutch, who sought to colonise the Lesser Antilles. When they arrived in large numbers to settle, the Caribs would usually retreat into the interior. From there they waged continuous raids on the settlements, even forming alliances with one European power against another. Caribs and Europeans often lived on the same island in an uneasy coexistence. Gradually, however, the constant influx of Europeans and their superior weapons drove the Caribs out of most of the islands to their remaining strongholds in Dominica and Grenada. In St Vincent they intermixed with Africans to form the group known as the Black Caribs, who after much bloody warfare with the British were deported to the coast of Belize. Their descendants today comprise the Garifuna people of Belize. In Dominica, Carib people persist in the north, occupying territory won by treaty with the British.

The Caribs never let up in their resistance to the Europeans who took their territory, captured their people and were bent on exterminating them. It is only because the Europeans could not fully subdue the Caribs that treaties were finally signed that ensured their survival as a race. By this time, though, they were severely decimated and they are now only found in large numbers in Dominica and Belize. Their fighting spirit and attitude of resistance continue today in efforts to draw all the aboriginal populations of the Caribbean together, to recreate aspects of their ancestry such as the re-enactment of historic voyages, and to collaborate with archaeologists in interpreting the historical record. Today they use modern technologies such as the Internet to maintain websites about their culture, past and present.

◆ **Using the Internet, find websites which support Amerindian peoples and showcase their activities and culture. What examples of resistance do you discern in how Amerindians portray themselves?**

2.4.2 The Africans

Millions of Africans were imported into Caribbean society, where the whites, their oppressors, formed a minority. To be able to keep so many people in subjugation for centuries meant that it was not only the threat of physical violence and death that was employed but also that some degree of psychological 'brainwashing' occurred. Resistance has to be understood against this peculiar background – that it would take both active and passive forms, and that sometimes it would not even be understood as resistance. One has to be able to enter the world of the enslaved to assess and judge whether their efforts succeeded or not.

Passive forms of resistance included acts of sabotage such as damaging tools, equipment and other property belonging to the planter, *malinger* (protracting an illness or delaying or avoiding work), deliberately misunderstanding instructions, committing suicide and inducing abortions. These acts were committed in situations where all power had been taken away and, although they might not greatly cripple operations on the plantation, they served to make the powerless feel that they could still control the events of their lives to some extent. Indeed, such acts proved expensive to the planter. For example, the deliberate abortions and the killing of babies denied the planter a continuous source of slaves so that the enslaved labour supply always had to be replenished by the slave trade.

Running away was also an option, and in territories where there were mountainous interiors prohibiting the Europeans from effective pursuit, sizeable Maroon communities were established (see Box 2.12). These were often involved in violent resistance in the form of rebellions and attacks on colonial forces. In one famous example, that of Haiti, the enslaved managed to set up a successful independent republic and force the French colonial authorities to give up their power (see Box 2.13).

The history of the enslaved Africans shows that for the most part they did not accept their fate passively; they resisted, and some of them, for example the Maroons, resisted successfully.

Cultural resistance

Europeans made a priority of wiping out different aspects of African culture in order to substitute European culture, thus making the Africans more subservient and controllable. This form of psychological brainwashing required some cunning responses from the captives. They continued to use African words where possible, they hybridised African religions onto Christianity, they

told their Anansi stories as they recounted their oral folklore, and they made up songs and performances that ridiculed the white man. Drumming was particularly feared by the Europeans because of its associations with war. Although banned in several territories, it continued

as a major cultural retention. Africans, then, made great efforts to protect and practise their cultural heritage as a form of resistance. These survivals have given us the syncretic religions typical of the Caribbean and also our much-valued musical heritage.

BOX 2.12 The Maroons

Throughout the history of the Conquest and the colonisation period in Caribbean history, individuals and groups sought freedom from oppression by running away. The Amerindians tried it and so did the enslaved Africans. They were only successful in hiding from capture in those terrains that were inhospitable and proved challenging to the European military forces sent to bring them back. They sought refuge in mountainous territories in the Caribbean and in the interior forests of the Guianas. In Jamaica, in the Blue Mountains and the Cockpit Country, and in British, Dutch and French Guiana they settled and formed viable stable communities. In the communities they founded, resistance and resilience were core values and this was reinforced by the practice of African religions and the healing arts, as well as family life and organisation according to kin. Land was communally owned and decision-making was participatory and based on kinship networks. They were able to develop self-sufficiency in agriculture and raided the plantations mainly for women, weapons and gunpowder. They were so successful in waging war on the Europeans that in both Suriname and Jamaica peace treaties were signed, giving them lands on which they could live without interference.

The Maroons in Jamaica, for example, made their escape from their Spanish slave masters when the British took over the island in 1655. They resisted attempts to dislodge them from their mountain hideaways, fighting wars against the new British government twice, in 1739 and 1796. After the second war the British reneged on their peace agreement with the Maroons, arrested them and deported them to North America. Most of them, or their descendants, later returned to Africa to the free state of Sierra Leone.

Communalistic values were essential to Maroon survival in the wild, and in this they drew on their African roots and culture. They therefore set up a rival society based on values at odds with the individualistic, capitalist enterprise of the plantation economy. Their presence – communities of free black people existing long before the abolition of slavery and actively engaging the

European in combat – proved invaluable as an alternative model or ideal on which enslaved Africans could base their self-concept. It laid to rest the notion that the European was superior and, although the enslaved had to defer to the Europeans in daily interaction, in their gatherings and celebrations the planters were mocked.



Fig. 2.14 Colonel Robertson, the chief of the Maroons of the Cockpit Country, with his wife Mrs Robertson

In Guyana, Suriname, Jamaica and Hispaniola the presence of Africans living freely in the interior acted as a beacon or symbol of what was possible to those on the plantations. This was the main reason why the Europeans tried every strategy, even importing troops, to destroy these settlements. The symbolic power of freed Africans living nearby acted as a tremendous psychological boost to enslaved Africans. It demonstrated that one could escape the oppressors. It also resurrected hopes that African customs and ways of life could be restored.

Armed resistance

More active forms of resistance did occur on a regular basis, but the Africans had few weapons and could not communicate effectively between the various plantations. Nevertheless, revolts and rebellions made life in the colonies unsafe and risky for Europeans. Sporadic and isolated incidents were common (for example, an African killing a white man), and all whites lived with the ever-present threat of being poisoned by their house slaves. Rebellions that grew into full-scale revolutions, involving the whole territory and continuing for a protracted period, did erupt from time to time but were largely suppressed with great cruelty. The most famous and successful was the Haitian Revolution of 1791.

Research mini-project

- 1 Read Box 2.13. Find out about the leaders of the Haitian Revolution and write a brief biography of each.
- 2 Identify THREE other major slave rebellions that took place in the Caribbean, and find out their dates and the major figures involved.

BOX 2.13 The Haitian Revolution

Under French rule Haiti was known as St Domingue. It was the largest sugar producer of the French Caribbean and in the late eighteenth century the most valuable plantation economy in the world. A socially stratified plantation society had developed where half a million Africans lived in bondage, with many thousands of free coloureds ('gens du couleur'), the children of Frenchmen and their slaves, who were also dissatisfied. These people were free, often educated and had careers as doctors, pharmacists, teachers and even slave owners. However, in the rigidly stratified society, they suffered discriminatory practices because they were not white – neither 'grands blancs' nor 'petits blancs'.

It is the activities of this relatively privileged group that actually began the revolt against the whites and provided the opportunity that was quickly grasped by the enslaved Africans. It mushroomed into a full-scale slave rebellion that was further expanded into a revolution, which wiped out society as it was known. An estimated 350 000 people died in this revolution before Haiti was declared a free republic in 1804. The main leader of the revolution was Toussaint L'Ouverture.

This revolution saw Haiti fighting France (under Napoleon) and Britain at different times and even forming alliances with Spain. Caribbean historians today credit the success of this revolution to:

- the role of Maroon communities in mounting guerrilla-type offensives against the Europeans;
- Vodun religious beliefs and practices in providing a unifying force;

- the genius of African leaders such as L'Ouverture, Christophe and Dessalines.

The existence of a Black Republic in 1804, where the slaves had freed themselves and were now governing themselves, reverberated throughout the slave societies of the Caribbean.



Fig. 2.15 Toussaint L'Ouverture

Abolition

Freed African ex-slaves were deeply involved in the movement to abolish slavery in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Olaudah Equiano, an ex-slave from the State of Virginia (then a British colony), settled in Britain and married an Englishwoman. In 1789 he wrote his autobiography, which included graphic descriptions of the life of a slave. He subsequently toured the country extensively as part of the campaign for the abolition of slavery. Another African, Ottobah Cugoana, was kidnapped and sold into slavery in 1770 at the age of 13 and was sent to work on a Grenada plantation. He was set free and went to Britain to live. He wrote letters and articles for newspapers arguing for abolition, and also wrote an autobiography, in 1787. It is probable that he and Equiano knew each other.

Superficially it may seem that the African responses to centuries of oppression were largely ineffective. Historians today are of the view, though, that the continued violence in the colonies was one of the main reasons why the slave trade and then slavery was abolished. The traditional account emphasised the activities of the Quakers and other humanitarian groups in England in bringing about the end of slavery. Many influential members of the British House of Commons were sympathisers and the case against slavery was widely debated in the British Parliament. Nowadays more credit goes to the part that the enslaved Africans played in ending their own servitude. The continued violence and the high costs of maintaining the slave system made sugar plantations uneconomic to operate. Eventually European governments were prepared to abandon their commitment to actively supporting the costly sugar producers of the Caribbean and did away with the Navigation Laws, opening up markets to free trade.

Resistance after Emancipation

The end of slavery did not mean the end of resistance. After Emancipation Africans had to struggle to establish viable systems of production and political arrangements that would make 'freedom' into more than just a hand-to-mouth existence. All attempts by African people in the Caribbean to downplay the emphasis on European ideas and ideals and supplant them with more Afrocentric ones are examples of resistance in the modern era. The **reparations** movement (Box 2.14) is a bold move that continues this theme of resistance.

The word **reparations** means that it is necessary to make amends, that some compensation is being asked for, with regard to some damage or injury that has occurred.

This movement represents a bold and innovative gesture through which we learn that history does not just 'happen' but that we can be held accountable for the past in the here and now. This kind of thinking is a good example of tracing history in Caribbean society and culture today. The idea has not yet met with a serious response from the former slaveholding countries but it is provocative and shows that slavery is still very much part of the issues being debated and analysed in contemporary life.

BOX 2.14

The reparations movement

The reparations movement is an example of the resistance to slavery that is going on even now. African groups and organisations today have set up committees in different countries to publicise their intention of seeking compensation for:

- the deaths of millions of Africans in the slave trade;
- the forced labour expended by millions of enslaved Africans over hundreds of years;
- the value of resources taken out of Africa during colonial rule (e.g. copper).

They seek compensation in monetary terms from the countries that profited from the slave trade, slavery and colonialism. However, they feel that some acknowledgement of guilt and an apology from European countries is equally important. This spirit of resistance and defiance today they see as necessary. They feel that African people need to be aware that some redress has been put in train for the racism that they have suffered at the hands of Europeans.

ACTIVITY 2.5

1. Write a short report on the reparations movement for your school newsletter or a local paper. In your report, give THREE reasons why the movement considers that former slaveholding countries should compensate African nations for their loss.
2. There are African peoples who are opposed to the reparations movement. Suggest TWO arguments to justify their position.

2.4.3 *Indentured Immigrants*

The Indian labourers also experienced great hardship on the plantations and the Indian government actually stopped immigration several times because of reports of the cruelty being suffered by their nationals. Although a Protector of the Immigrants was appointed in each colony where there were indentured servants, most of them were biased in favour of planter interests. Because of their bonded state the labourers could not resort to collective bargaining to seek redress about their low wages and conditions of work. Inevitably then, protests and widespread unrest resulted in Guyana and Trinidad. This culminated in the serious outbreak on Leonora Estate in Guyana in 1869. In 1870 the British responded by setting up a commission of inquiry but this did not substantially address the problems of the labourers.

While some of the indentured servants resisted their condition by running away or refusing to work, most of them were able to establish some other small business on the side, usually market gardening, and invest its proceeds in land, small-scale trade enterprises, and shopkeeping concerns. Their efforts at entrepreneurship represent an extraordinary resilience amidst every kind of hardship and were a very productive form of resistance. They quickly became independent of the plantation, and if they chose to work there after their period of indenture, they usually had other economic interests as well. These strategies succeeded largely because of the joint household structure (households comprised two or three generations and extended family members) where everyone worked in the family business and it was the business rather than individual success that was important.

◆ **List the ways that Caribbean people have resisted oppression and continue to do so today. What role do you see for young Caribbean people today in resisting oppression?**

SUMMARY

In the history of the Caribbean the themes of genocide and oppression are important and so are resistance and survival. Genocide, slavery and indentureship are each by themselves horrific forms of oppression. For all three to have occurred in this region is an extraordinary circumstance. Yet the oppressed have forged lives, and even family life, under these conditions. Some cultural erasure might have occurred but other cultural processes have come together in the Caribbean to create some

unique, culturally hybrid forms. Resistance occurs in many ways, as we have seen, and this dynamic, cultural fusion is a response that declares culture is resilient and it will resurface in different guises. One of the major elements, then, of Caribbean culture is its resistant response to domination or oppression.

2.5

Movements towards independence

From Emancipation until the end of the nineteenth century, Caribbean people were shaking off the mental, psychological and emotional trauma associated with enslaved and bonded labour. This process of 'realising freedom', however, took place within a colonial society that at times seemed as oppressive as it had been in the era that had gone before. By the dawn of the twentieth century, Caribbean people were increasingly coming to understand what 'freedom' meant and beginning to challenge the very basis of colonialism, particularly in the aftermath of two world wars. We may look at the entire period after Emancipation until the first half of the twentieth century as a time when Caribbean people were preparing for self-determination, for finally throwing off European domination.

2.5.1 *Political Enfranchisement*

Under colonialism the Caribbean colony was under the control of the European power. However, once Emancipation had been achieved it was only a matter of time before Caribbean people would develop the skills and expertise necessary to challenge the status quo. Their first goal was **political enfranchisement**.

Political enfranchisement refers to the right of a people or nation to determine their own affairs.

Caribbean people in their thousands, in the years after Emancipation, migrated to different regional destinations for work and better wages. The Panama Canal, the modern sugar plantations of Cuba, Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo, the oil refineries of Curaçao and Aruba, and the oilfields of Venezuela helped to develop a consciousness of political and economic conditions in these countries and exposed workers to new and different ideas. Returning soldiers who had served Britain in the world wars in far-flung reaches of the empire were unwilling to resume a lowly status in the social hierarchy because they had been exposed

to different ideas and political philosophies. Moreover, the ideas and speeches of Marcus Garvey (see Box 14.2) of Jamaica pervaded the entire Caribbean. Black consciousness and nationalist sentiments began to seem enabling strategies of resistance.

Trade unionism

In the 1930s economic conditions had deteriorated to such a level that the region was wracked by labour riots, strikes and wide-scale protests. Violence and mayhem followed. This period saw the rise of charismatic leaders in the labour movement who, riding on their mass popularity, made the successful transition to political leadership. Uriah Buzz Butler (Fig. 2.16), Adrian Cola Rienzi and Captain A.A. Cipriani of Trinidad and Tobago, Alexander Bustamante and Norman Washington Manley of Jamaica (Figs 2.17 and 2.18), Grantley Adams of Barbados (Fig. 2.19) and Nathaniel Crichlow of Guyana organised and developed the Caribbean trade union movement. While some Creole whites were involved in the early stages it quickly became a working-class movement dedicated towards better working conditions for the poor as well as improvements in health and education. This concern with social welfare made it inevitable that the trade unions would be the birthplace for Caribbean political parties.

Political developments

The form of government that was widespread throughout the British Caribbean was called the 'old representative system'. A 'Governor' was appointed from England who

transmitted the dictates of the Colonial Office to the colonies. He ruled with the help of a nominated council and an elected assembly. The latter proved troublesome to the governor on many occasions. However, for a long time their disputes were largely between whites from England and Creole whites (planters born in the Caribbean) about how best to run the colony.

During the nineteenth century Britain took more direct control of many of the colonies by eliminating the elected assembly. The Governor and a legislative council, with official and nominated unofficial members, now ruled. This was called crown colony government and it proved oppressive to a population of ex-slaves and ex-indentured labourers who were economically distressed and looking for ways to improve their condition.

Universal adult suffrage

Widespread unrest in the 1930s forced the colonial authorities to reinstate elected representation. The unrest had mainly economic roots, but many felt that better political representation would allow them to press for much-needed economic relief. Across the English-speaking Caribbean between 1934 and 1938 workers came out on strike, held protests and rioted, while the unemployed and distressed took part in hunger marches. Communications between agitators in different territories made it possible for these protests to be orchestrated, while the twin spectres of race and political radicalism struck fear into the hearts of colonial governors. The authorities took military action against protesters and strengthened their armed forces, but they also appealed to

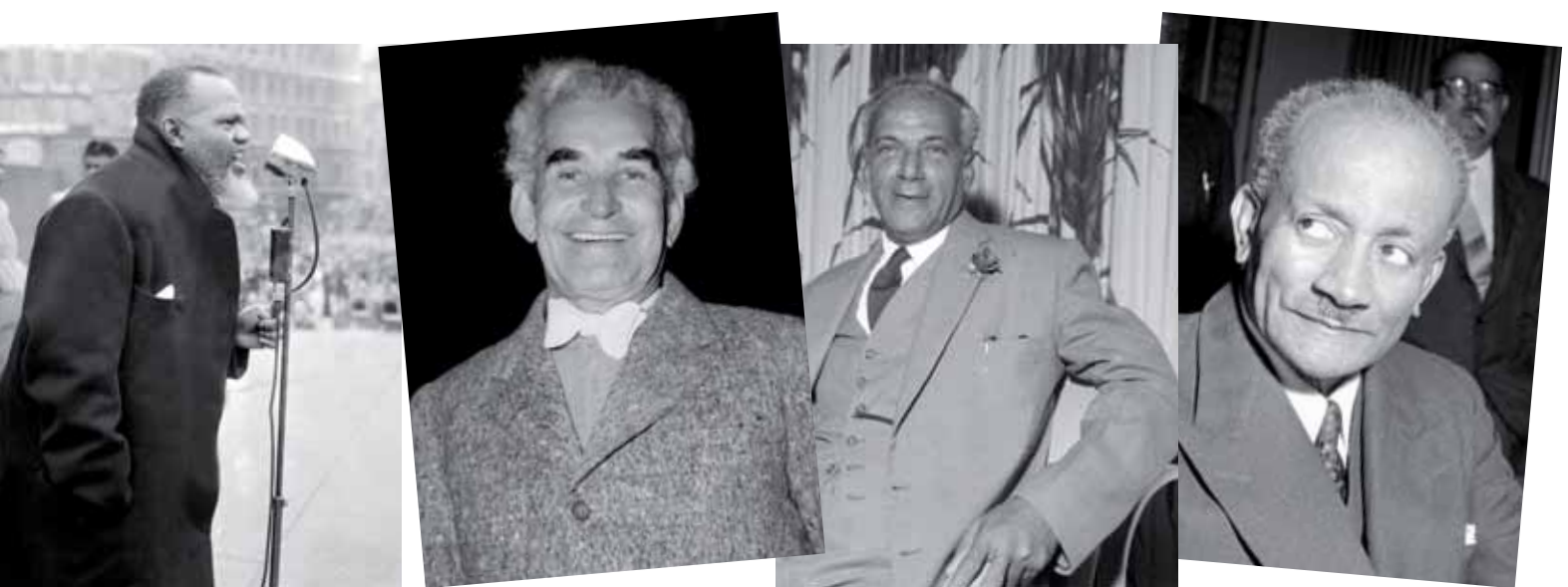


Fig. 2.16 Uriah Buzz Butler

Fig. 2.17 Alexander Bustamante

Fig. 2.18 Norman Manley

Fig. 2.19 Grantley Adams

the government in London for a commission of enquiry. This commission, the Moyne Commission (also known as the West India Royal Commission), was sent out in 1938 but its main findings were withheld until after the Second World War. When it was finally published, it recommended social and political reform.

Political reform had already begun to occur, though gradually, in the wake of the 1930s unrest, and from 1944 onwards Caribbean territories under British colonial control were granted **universal adult suffrage**. There

Universal adult suffrage means one person, one vote.

were no restrictions put on the population (except that of age) in being eligible to vote and elect members to the legislature. Once this occurred it was only a matter of time before these territories sought internal self-government.

Internal self-government

The territories remained colonies with Britain's interests being overseen by a Governor General, but a chief minister and members of the legislature were now elected from the ranks of Caribbean people of all ethnicities. This

limited self-government could be viewed as a period of transition to full independence, as once it became possible to supplant white or European persons in positions of control, colonialism no longer made any sense.

It also became clear to many of the trade union leaders that the interests of labour had to be represented in the government so that laws could be passed to protect trade unions and their activities as well as the rights of workers. The traditional make-up of the legislative bodies comprised persons who were of the planter class and sympathetic to the needs of that group. The strategy was to get the trade union leaders elected to office so that they could form a lobby agitating for internal self-government and then full independence. Thus, once the trade union movement began, the whole colonial system in the Caribbean was being challenged, since colonialism depended on social class divisions, with European governors, planters, supervisors and property owners exploiting labour and people of a different colour and race. Once Africans and Indians were elected to office, the writing was on the wall for the colonial system.

ACTIVITY 2.6

Document Study

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow. You may need to do some further research to complete the activity fully.

In the British West Indies, Jamaica was chosen as a showcase to demonstrate the British policy of colonial reform. The drafting of a new constitution granting internal self-government and an election based on universal suffrage in 1944 paved the way for constitutional decolonization in the British West Indies. ... The Jamaican Progressive League and other organizations [had] forwarded proposals for constitutional reform toward self-government to the West India Royal Commission in 1938. ... The immediate impact of war had postponed further negotiations. When in 1942 the People's National Party (PNP), founded in 1938 by Norman Manley and others in the Fabian tradition of the British Labour Party ... sent another memorandum on constitutional reform to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, this coincided with the Anglo-American discussions on the colonial question and was consequently adopted to show goodwill on colonial reform. ...

The constitution was finally enacted in 1944, and the first electoral struggle under universal suffrage took place in Jamaica even before the war ended. Ironically, Manley and the PNP, the major force pushing for decolonization, lost the first election by a clear margin to the eccentric yet popular and charismatic Alexander Bustamante – who had initially opposed the move towards self-government strongly – and his Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) founded just in time for the election.

(Füllberg-Stolberg, 2004, pp.136–7)

1. Why do you think Jamaica was chosen as a 'showcase'?
2. Suggest why the British government wanted to 'show goodwill' on colonial reform at the time of Anglo-American discussions on colonial matters.
3. Explain the relationship between the trade union movement and early Jamaican political parties.
4. Why was 1944 significant for constitutional developments in the Caribbean as a whole?

2.5.2 Economic Enfranchisement

Although under colonialism the economy was largely organised by the European power, Caribbean people also tried to resist and develop their own ways of making a living. Their goal was to achieve **economic enfranchisement**.

Economic enfranchisement is the condition whereby a country or nation achieves the right to determine how it will develop its systems of production.

Diversification

Plantation economies were based on large quantities of cheap, unskilled, manual labour and *monoculture* (the production of one cash crop, namely sugar cane). Almost all the harvest was exported to Europe to be processed. Food production was haphazard and it was mainly left up to the ex-slaves and indentured labourers to grow fruit, vegetables and provisions for subsistence and sale in local Sunday markets. During the nineteenth century, as it became clear that the downturn in sugar prices would mean a decline in plantation economies, Caribbean small farmers or peasants turned more and more towards developing alternative cash crops for export. Cocoa, bananas, coffee, ginger, cotton, coconuts and arrowroot were grown by peasant farmers on their smallholdings. They also grew food crops and reared farm animals. In so doing they developed a **diversified local economy**.

A **diversified local economy** grows different types of cash crops, food crops and livestock.

This strategy of economic diversification attempted to make small farmers self-sufficient and resilient in the face of economic hardship. It kept them independent of the planters and the low wages offered on the plantations. It introduced them to an outward focus by having to organise themselves for the export market and to develop some sophistication in making trading connections with the wider world.

They were largely on their own, however. They received little support and encouragement from the colonial authorities, who would have preferred a more subservient peasantry that was easy to control. The peasants were charged

high rents for land and were frequently evicted. The planters sometimes refused to sell land to the peasants and blocked their efforts to seek credit facilities. The peasant proprietors also experienced sabotage. In the face of such discriminatory practices they banded together and bought whole plantations from impoverished planters who could not afford to refuse the sale. Baptist ministers assisted them in buying land, especially in Jamaica, to establish free villages (Fig. 2.20). Others, with few alternatives, squatted on Crown lands, as in Trinidad and Guyana, for example.

It must be remembered that the peasantry's efforts to establish an economic basis for their independence from the planters was done under colonial rule. It could have been more successful and helped to develop a prosperous peasantry if the colonial authorities had not been deliberately obstructionist. They tended to side with planter interests. Efforts at economic diversification did assist the colony in establishing a more balanced economy and provided the peasants with a sense of independence, but it was ad hoc and could not raise the peasants far from poverty.

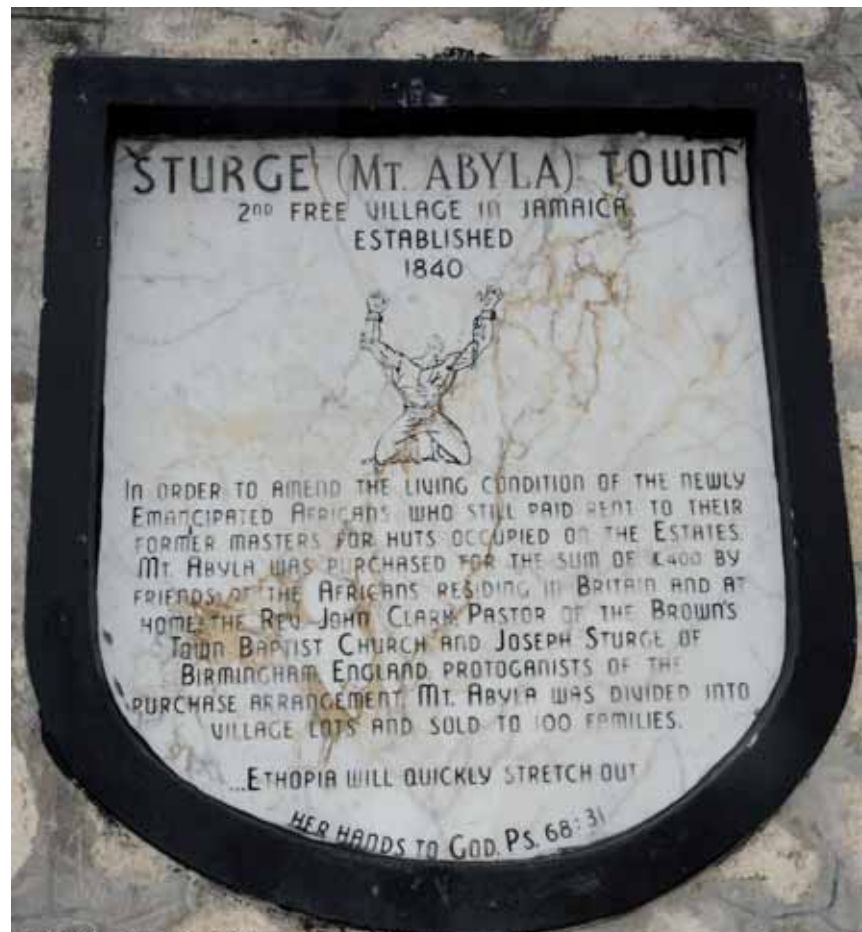


Fig. 2.20 Jamaican plaque associated with a free village

- ◆ Suggest why enfranchisement is an important concept in discussing the economic and political developments of the Caribbean in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Savings societies

The entrepreneurial spirit among the Caribbean peasantry led to the development of savings societies and building and loan societies. Today their functions have been largely taken over by commercial banks, although credit unions and cooperatives (see Box 2.15) still exist.

BOX 2.15

A brief history of the cooperative and credit union movement

The cooperative movement began in the UK, with a group called the Rochdale Pioneers, who based their work on the ideas of Robert Owen, a Scottish industrialist. Members pooled their resources in order to buy mills, bakeries and shops and the profits were distributed using a dividend system. The cooperative movement was also linked with the rise of credit unions, which were run on similar principles, and the two ideas achieved much success in Europe.

In the Caribbean people already had traditional systems that mirrored the cooperative and the credit union. The names varied, from *Pardner* in Jamaica to *Meeting* in Barbados and *Sou-Sou* in Trinidad, but the idea was the same. Members pooled their resources, then each member had the right to take the 'pot' in turn, replenishing it from their profits so that the next members had capital to use to set up or improve their business. The earliest consumer cooperatives were set up in Guyana, where the idea is still very strong. Credit unions were introduced by missionaries from North America during the 1940s and were widely accepted, in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago in the early 1940s and in Dominica from 1951 (Jamaica CCUL, 2004).

Research mini-project

Find out about the history of savings societies, credit unions and/or cooperatives in your territory. How did they contribute to economic enfranchisement?



SUMMARY

Economic and political enfranchisement of Caribbean people in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was born out of their continued resistance to the planter class and control of the colony from the mother country. The resilience of Caribbean people in developing vibrant and diversified peasant economies came out of a spirit of resistance. They could not change the economic structures, however, and Caribbean societies remained very much plantation economies dominated by whites trying to stifle any initiative that was not solely concerned with their own welfare. This lack of interest on the part of the whites led to economic distress, and the response to this distress included the rise of trade unionism and political parties. Behind all this was a growing awareness of black consciousness and nationalism, both deeply embedded in a spirit of resistance. Thus, the end of enslaved and bonded labour did not see a minimising of resistance; instead it changed focus as it grappled with bringing down colonialism itself.



Wrap Up

Analysing the history of the Caribbean shows how ethnocentric ideas have pervaded the traditional account. Resistance is a central theme in Caribbean history and uncovering ethnocentrism is a form of resistance. Hybridisation is also a process of resistance where the culture of the captors, the enslaved and the indentured come together today in unique forms. The struggle of Caribbean nations to achieve sustainable economies is a continuing act of resistance to overcome the underdeveloped state in which the European countries left their colonial possessions. Independence – political, economic and psychological – continues to be important to ideas of resistance. Tracing history in Caribbean culture and society shows the extent to which historical events and processes arise in contemporary social life in the Caribbean.

Research TOPICS

Older persons, especially the very old, are good sources for the history of the immediate past. They will be able to recall events and ways of life that their grandparents spoke about so that you can have access, by speaking to them, to around a hundred years of history. This should make for a meaningful research study where the main source of information is oral history. You should focus on a specific topic or issue you want to investigate about the past in your country or district. Here are some examples to start you thinking about this:

- If there is a school that has at least a century-old history then you can research its background, its links with the metropolitan country, the kind of curriculum it used and the values that were thought important. These could all be compared with ethnocentric ideas about what was 'good' for the colonies, whether the school had elitist or democratic agendas, how many of its teachers were local and how that changed over the years, and whether that was in response to independence and other historical forces. Old school records as well as interviews with past students or even past principals would be helpful.
- If there are indigenous groups in your country, their members could give you insights as to their traditions and practices as well as those they know about through their ancestors that are no longer practised today. They will be able to tell you about how other more dominant groups in the society have interacted with them and what their position is now – one of resurgence, or marginalisation?
- Persons in rural areas who perhaps worked on large sugar estates or banana plantations in the past, or who had parents and grandparents who did, can give you information on how the economic landscape has changed in a specific local area, how it was organised then, who were the bosses and who were the workers, the quality of the relationships between them, and whether any significant events occurred to change the mode of production and/or these relationships. Their information can be cross-checked by you and related to the general historical trends that you know about in the Caribbean.

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Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Explain what is meant by 'ethnocentric ideas' and give ONE example. (2 marks)
(b) Suggest TWO ways in which Caribbean students of history can resist these ethnocentric ideas. (4 marks)
- 2 (a) Identify TWO indigenous groups that lived in the Caribbean before the coming of Columbus. (2 marks)
(b) Describe TWO ways in which indigenous Caribbean peoples resisted the European invaders. (4 marks)
- 3 (a) Write a definition of the following terms:
(i) the Middle Passage; (ii) the Triangular Trade. (2 marks)
(b) State TWO ways in which these terms are related to each other, based on your definitions. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) Describe TWO aspects of a slave society. (2 marks)
(b) Summarise TWO main differences and similarities between slavery and indentureship. (4 marks)
- 5 (a) Define the following terms:
(i) apprenticeship; (ii) encomienda;
(iii) enfranchisement; (iv) miscegenation. (4 marks)
(b) Explain how apprenticeship was used by the colonial powers. (2 marks)
- 6 (a) Identify TWO areas of the Indian subcontinent that supplied indentured labourers to the Caribbean. (2 marks)
(b) State TWO reasons why Indian indentured labourers went mainly to Guyana and Trinidad. (4 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Outline the major migrations into the Caribbean region that greatly affected society and culture.
- 2 Explain why it was possible for so few Europeans to dominate plantation society in the era of slavery.
- 3 Describe the legacies of slavery on Caribbean society and culture today.
- 4 Describe the strategies used by African, Indian and Amerindian groups in resisting oppression.
- 5 Distinguish between slavery as practised in the New World (the Americas) and in the Old World (Europe and Africa) and explain why New World slavery caused much greater suffering.

Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 Justify attempts by Caribbean historians and scholars to rewrite the history of the West Indies.
- 2 Assess the debate that says Emancipation came about largely due to the efforts of the enslaved in seeking freedom rather than to the humanitarian movement in England.
- 3 Discuss the extent to which economic life today is influenced by the plantation economy created by Europeans in the Caribbean.
- 4 Analyse selected aspects of resilience shown by Caribbean people in the transition from a slave to a free society.
- 5 Evaluate the extent to which political and economic enfranchisement in the Caribbean during the twentieth century influenced each other.

3

Characteristics of Society and Culture



Hindu ritual in the north of Trinidad

‘Society’ and ‘culture’ are terms in everyday use and many of us believe that we understand them correctly. A quick way of verifying this is to reflect on whether we know the difference between the two. In this chapter you will not only learn conventional definitions of society and culture, some of which you may know already, but we will move beyond that to question what definitions say about society and culture. Definitions are popular, shorthand ways of representing knowledge, which instead of clarifying meaning may obscure it, especially in the social sciences. We need to look more deeply at the way in which we experience society and culture for clues to their real meaning.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. evaluate typical definitions of society and culture;
2. analyse the relationship between society and culture;
3. evaluate the norms, customs and institutions which prescribe behaviour;
4. recognise gendered practices;
5. discuss different portrayals of Caribbean 'society' and 'culture'.

3.1

Definitions

Definitions such as 'society is a collection of people living in the same area over time' and 'culture is the way of life of a people' are constructed with an image of knowledge in mind where facts and essential characteristics are stated as if they summed up the story in its entirety. As we shall see, unpicking these definitions will lead us into less cut-and-dried understandings of society and culture.

3.1.1 Statics Versus Dynamics: The Problem of Change

The social world is characterised by constant change. So too is the natural world; for example, rivers, earth movements, the subatomic world, diseases, viruses and so on present a dynamic, highly interactive and constantly changing milieu. Yet knowledge in the natural sciences is often portrayed as if only predictable patterns and processes take place. Thus, the major aspects of life in the social and natural worlds – dynamism, change, interaction – tend to be wiped out by the bias that has operated in how we treat knowledge. Let us look again at these two definitions:

- society – a collection of people living in the same area over time;
- culture – the ways of life of a people.

We do not see anything here that is dynamic and changeful (having an innate tendency to change). Neither do these definitions seem to be problematic or unduly complex. What is only inferred, and never made explicit, is that for a society to exist there must be arrangements, interactions and relationships that make social life possible.

Describe any features of 'society' which can be regarded as being dynamic.

The idea of a definition is not itself being questioned here. Definitions are useful, particularly in the natural sciences where they carry important information in a nutshell. However, in the social sciences definitions tend to reduce important information to static relationships that do not give a true picture of the social world. On the other hand, if a comprehensive definition were to be attempted it would be much too long; it would no longer constitute a definition but become an extended explanation. We need to be aware that when we use definitions of social phenomena they are of limited value as explanations. It may not be too far-fetched to claim that many of the intentions to improve society expressed by governments, international bodies, churches and other organisations and individuals suffer from an overly static understanding of social life.

3.1.2 Society: Multiple Meanings

The strategy we will use here is to come to an understanding of what 'society' is not through a definition, but by mapping out all its various meanings (see Fig. 3.1). To do this we will:

- a. examine popular ways of using the term;
- b. analyse how it is understood in different disciplines of knowledge.

We may notice, for example, that while a definition such as 'society is a collection of people living in an area for a long time' is accepted, the ways in which people use the term assume far deeper meanings. By surveying the ways in which the term is used we may get closer to a more meaningful interpretation.

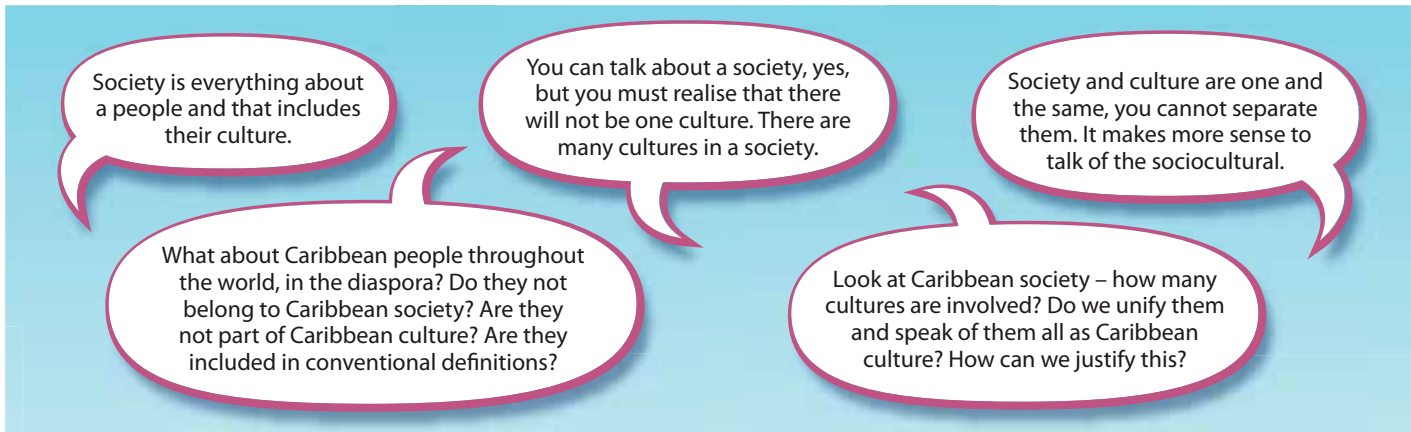


Fig. 3.1 What does 'society' mean?

ACTIVITY 3.1

Below are three examples of how the term 'society' appears in social life:

- Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA);
- National Audubon Society;
- civil society.

1. Explain how 'society' is understood in each of these.
2. Which TWO of the three listed share the same understandings of 'society'?
3. Identify another understanding of 'society' in popular use that is not evident in the examples given.

Popular ways of portraying 'society'

Let us look at other ways in which the term is used and see if we can discern themes similar to those you identified in Activity 3.1, or even different understandings. Especially common today is the term *information society*, describing a society where maximum use is made of information and communications technologies (ICTs). Groups in society employ the new technologies to lead lives of utmost efficiency and enjoyment. ICTs imbue all aspects of life: businesses are networked into large databases, financial transactions are flexible and can take place in multiple locations, shopping can be done on the Internet, teletext messages offer just one of many alternatives to quick communications, and computers are found if not in every home, certainly in companies and associations of all kinds. The term 'information society' is thus saying that the ways in which information is managed, stored and communicated in these times deeply influence and alter relationships among groups of people and permeate

the whole society, making it palpably different from, say, ten years ago.

We can easily understand this if we focus on groups of people such as the elderly, the poor, technophobes and citizens of countries with a low per capita income, who have all somehow been left out of the computer age. They suffer all kinds of disadvantages in trying to live lives to the best of their ability. They find that they do not have the requisite skills for work, for study and even for conducting business or simple transactions in the public domain. Operating in the everyday environments in which they are required to remember PINs, interpret computerised transactions and communicate via voicemail, email, cellular telephones and text messaging, and so on, leaves them with a diminished confidence in



Fig. 3.2 Growing up in the information society

themselves as effectively functioning adults. Such groups of people, some of whom may actually live in high-tech information societies and some in developing societies, experience social life differently from others who are literate in computer and information technologies. The *digital divide* is a term that calls attention to the different relationships that the haves (the computer savvy) and the have-nots (those who do not know how to make use of the technologies or have little access to them) experience in society. Contrary to what some people think, it is not a continuum but a gap that is widening.

ACTIVITY 3.2

1. Using your country as an example, reflect on the nature of the digital divide. Which groups are enabled, and which groups disadvantaged, by the dominance of ICTs in society?
2. On an international level, identify countries on either side of the digital divide. Suggest reasons why the gap may be widening rather than closing.

Today the rhetoric on human development emphasises the need for another kind of society, a *learning society*. Reform efforts visualise the whole society as one that actively promotes and enhances learning. This is seen as necessary in today's world of rapid and unprecedented change, where learning has to be continuous. Those who advocate the concept of a learning society see that even normal participation in church, work and leisure should involve learning. It should be among the principles that characterise how the media operate, as well as the health sector and government departments. Everyone should see themselves as a learner. A focus on continuous learning in society has the potential to deepen the knowledge and understanding we have of each other and help us to share that knowledge in more meaningful ways that help to improve our relationships.

What is the understanding of society in the term 'learning society'? Like the 'information society', it refers to the quality of the relationships that structure interaction in a group of people living together. There is also a stress on something of value that you may also have discovered when you attempted to describe civil society (see Activity 3.1), where society is seen to be working towards the attainment of some ideal. The idea of a civil society is one with a certain vision of society where the citizenry operates and benefits from lawful and just relationships. The 'learning society' is similar. It is a way of visualising society where, through an emphasis on learning, a more humane society results. As a relatively

new idea about how our society should be organised, it is an ideal which governments, **non-governmental organisations** (NGOs) and international organisations

The term **non-governmental organisation**, or NGO, is used for any non-profit group organised on a local, national or international level.

are promoting in education, the economy, the public service, health, and so on.

◆ **Identify any reforms or measures already in place (or being considered) in your society which may be helpful in enhancing its potential as a 'learning society'.**

In mapping out the various ways in which the term 'society' is used in everyday life, we have seen that they extend far beyond 'a group of people living together in a place over a long period of time'. The most important aspects seem to have been left out of such a definition. In social life there are a variety of perspectives depending on the group to which one belongs or one's social location. Thus, one term can have multiple and conflicting meanings. For example, 'society' has all of the following meanings:

- a group of people living together in a defined territorial space, experiencing continuity over a long period of time;
- a group which shares a common purpose that structures their relationships and interactions;
- the experience of citizenship within a space;
- an ideal which a group of people is striving to achieve.

All these meanings are in popular use, and although no distinction is made when we are using the term in the various senses, people usually know how to interpret it. For example, they know when the term is being used to indicate the social institutions of the land, as in 'Society today is in need of healing', or when it is used in a narrow and circumscribed sense of a common purpose as in 'The Audubon Society will hold its annual general meeting on ...'. It is important to remember that 'society' will continue to be a contested concept and any definition chosen is merely that, a choice. In other words, there is no one definition of the concept 'society'. Nor is there a law written anywhere that says definitively what a society is. People living in groups from time immemorial have tried to construct their day-to-day living on an image of what their society should be like. The meanings of society listed above are **social constructions** of the term.

The term **social construction** refers to ways people have of giving meaning to something and then coming to believe in it.

Let us consider each of these definitions in turn.

1. *A group of people living together in a defined territorial space, experiencing continuity over a long period of time.* There are those of us who conjure up an image of space and place where the group is 'contained', and such a construction of society has a strong historical, political, geographical and ecological perspective. (This view ignores the idea that members of a society – for example, Caribbean society – can live in areas that are far removed from the Caribbean, as in the diaspora.)
2. *A group which shares a common purpose that structures their relationships and interactions.* This definition stresses the common bonds – 'values' – that group members share, which must necessarily structure their interaction and relationships. The social construction popular here is in terms of consensus, harmony and order that ought to prevail in society. It portrays an image of society as stable and peaceful, but in some plural societies there are deep-seated tensions within the society, often because two or more groups have conflicting 'common purposes'.
3. *The experience of citizenship within a space.* This focuses on the political aspect of society, where those who belong to the group have formal membership involving laws, sanctions and official marks of 'belonging'. It sounds static, but citizenship can be dynamic too, as the citizen body increases and decreases demographically. However, the definition again ignores that some citizens do not live in the 'shared space' but have migrated to find work or to study while retaining their citizenship in the country where they were born. Others form part of the society even though their actual political citizenship is elsewhere.
4. *An ideal which a group of people is striving to achieve.* This definition sees society as actually having a life of its own and evolving towards some ideal; it is always becoming and we cannot say that we have achieved it as yet. Visions of civil society and the learning society fit into this conception of what the term 'society' means.

All the above are social constructions about what a society is, and people can hold different and conflicting images of society quite comfortably. Nevertheless, not all these images are held with the same intensity. There tends to be a dominant image that is shared, and apparently it is the least complex version that often has widespread acceptance.

Disciplinary perspectives

Let us now move from popular understandings of society and focus on how various disciplines, particularly the social science disciplines, view society. A 'discipline'

is an organised body of knowledge such as biology or economics. In the western traditions of Europe and North America knowledge is classified into the physical or natural sciences, the social sciences, and the arts and humanities. There are certain subdivisions and overlaps but generally the three-way classification is accepted by scholars and by academic and professional communities as representing the broad divisions of knowledge.

All social science disciplines study society, emphasising different aspects. Thus, a body of perspectives has grown up among students and scholars that emphasise certain views of society according to their subject speciality. Examining some of the ways in which society is perceived in the different social science disciplines deepens our understanding of the diversity and divergence of opinions associated with it. One meaning that we are interested in clarifying is its perceived relationship with 'culture'.

Geography

Geographical ideas form one of the many elements underlying the everyday use of the term 'Caribbean society'. Geography assumes that the groups of people who live in a region develop ways of interacting that are significantly influenced by the place or space in which they live. Caribbean society will thus differ from American society and from social life in the Amazon. This notion of society also has an ecological perspective where people develop ways of adapting to their environmental conditions as well as adapting the environment using their own unique knowledge and expertise. For example, the Dutch were able to bring their skills of land reclamation to the low-lying Guiana coastlands to create the conditions necessary for society to develop.

Given the strong linkage between people adapting their ways of life in a specific location and the concept of society, a social construction of society has evolved in geography that blurs the boundaries between 'Caribbean society' and 'Caribbean culture'. Geographers focus on different aspects of the subject as wide-ranging as physical geography, political or economic geography and social geography, always with the emphasis, however, on particular spaces.

History

History locates societies in time. For example, Roman society flourished at a certain time and no longer exists; the relationships that structured that society are long gone. Historians think of a society as located in time and belonging to a certain period. They study how the society changes over time. Historians thus have a notion of society as a set of dynamic relationships between and within different groups.

When historians speak of a society they tend to stress the social formation – the structure of groups and their relationships. They do not necessarily need to separate out culture for their purposes – though they do study culture in terms of the expressive arts in different periods – and thus their discussions about society are inclusive of culture. However, the discipline is broken down into a number of subdisciplines focusing on in-depth investigation of political developments, social and economic structures and specifically cultural phenomena, reflected in the designations *political history*, *social history*, *economic history*, *history of art*, and so on. Many historians also specialise in a particular period or era, or take up a recognised slant, for example Marxist historians, who follow Marx's analysis of society and its progression from the feudal arrangements associated with medieval peasant societies to the capitalist exploitation of workers, to the eventual victory of revolutionary socialism.

◆ If we agree that Roman 'society' no longer exists as it did during the Roman Empire, then how do we explain the persistence of Roman 'culture' to the present day? Some examples of Roman cultural forms are still evident in language (Latin), drama, law, government and engineering, among others.

Anthropology

Anthropology is the study of the societies that human beings have formed from earliest times to now. Of primary interest is the culture of these societies. An anthropological study of Caribbean society today may emphasise traditional societies such as that of the Amerindians or small communities such as the Rastafarians or the Chinese community in Jamaica. Anthropologists thus study societies by focusing on the culture of those societies, making virtually no distinction between the two.

Political science

Political science studies politics, government, political systems and power relationships among the interest groups in society. The boundaries of the state are traditionally seen as the limit of the society. Society thus has a geographical basis and is understood as a 'container' in which power relationships occur. Definitions which say that society is a 'defined territorial space' or 'citizenship within a space' illustrate a political science conception of the term 'society'.

Compared to the other social science disciplines discussed above, there seems to be less of a tendency to bring society and culture together as one indivisible

whole. On the other hand, society seems to be fused or equated with the state.

Sociology

Sociology is defined as the study of society and so it attempts to distinguish between 'society' and 'culture' and to specify the relations between the two. The dominant way of studying society is through an understanding of its **social structure**, including social

Social structure refers to the organised patterns, arrangements and interactions between groups who comprise the various social institutions and social organisations making up a society.

organisations **and institutions**. Examples of social institutions are religion, the economy, politics, education and health. Examples of social organisations are churches, the labour market, political parties, and so on, based on the different social institutions. Patterns of behaviour (which have cultural overtones) describe how members with different roles interact with each other. Thus, the meaning of society in sociology is bound up with social structure and social organisation. There are a number of different approaches within sociology, reflecting the history and development of the discipline. Functionalism and Marxism are two of the strongest of these (Box 3.1).

◆ Explain how social institutions and social organisations help to explain the concept of 'society'.

Social science disciplines study the same phenomenon – 'society' – but differently, as no one discipline can seemingly capture all its various facets. However, it is often the case that a social scientist becomes deeply socialised into the discipline in which he or she has specialised, and ignores or plays down the understanding of society put forward by the other disciplines. For example, the political scientist emphasises the impact of a political system on society, while a Marxist sociologist or historian focuses on the economic system in explaining society. We need to look out for this tendency to reduce and simplify what 'society' means to the specific aspects studied by a particular discipline (Box 3.2). Also, the difficulty of extricating culture from understandings about society has tended to mean that most social science disciplines conflate the two terms. Activity 3.3 on page 66 considers ten different definitions of society.

For our purposes, what is especially important is what the disciplines emphasise in their various explicit

BOX 3.1

Sociological approaches

Functionalist sociologists tend to view social structure as working in such a way as to ensure peace and stability. The structures that organise relationships and interactions make certain that the collective will of members is satisfied. Undesirable behaviours are discouraged through social structures such as laws, norms, rules, roles, values and sanctions. For example, churchgoing is a strong Caribbean norm encouraging conformist behaviours. The processes of socialisation and education are the major ways through which respect for these laws and norms is taught.

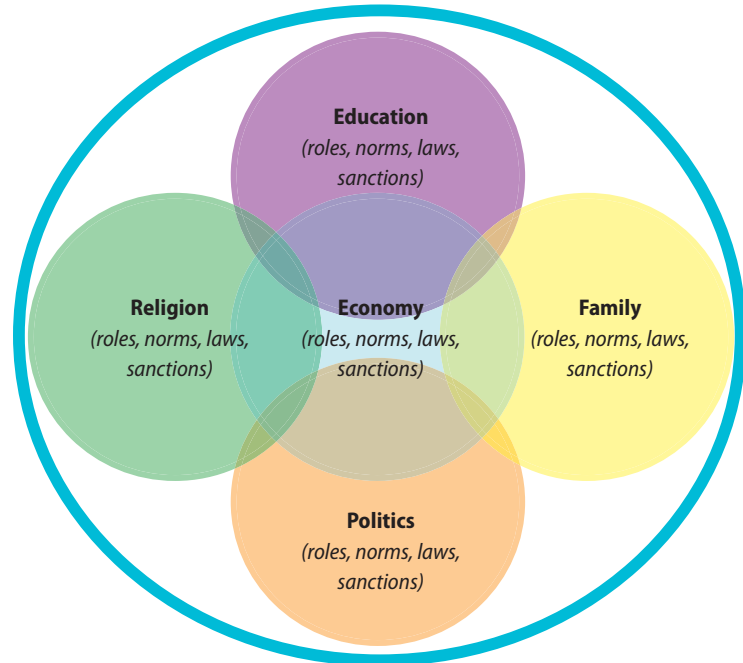
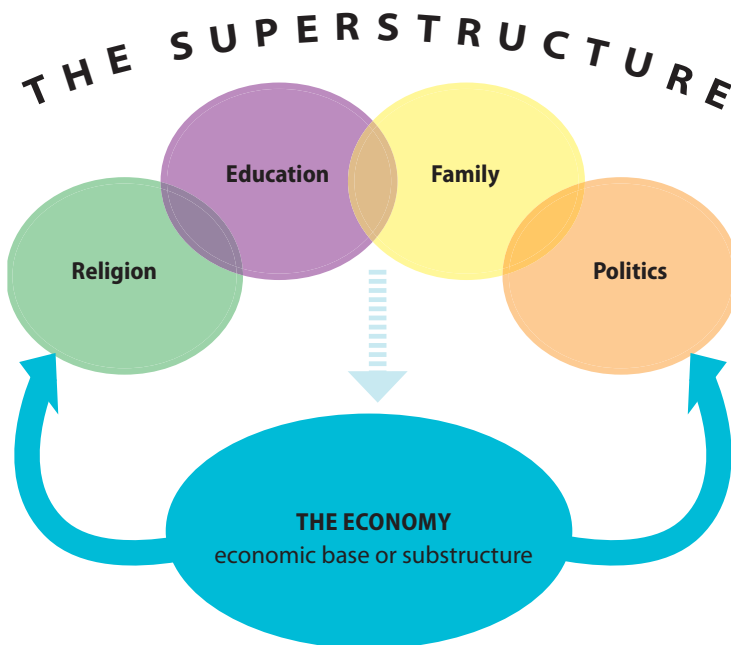


Fig. 3.3 The functionalist view of society

Functionalism 'sees' society as a relatively unproblematic interaction of all social institutions.



Marxists 'see' society as dominated by one social institution, the economy.

Marxist sociologists also understand society in terms of its social structure but do not hold the harmonious view described above. They say that the structures in capitalist societies are enabling for the wealthy and coercive for poorer groups. This means that since the economic structure of the society dominates interaction and relationships, the interests of the elites are always taken care of. Gross inequalities occur in the society and the poor do not have the power to change societal arrangements. According to Marxists, the processes of socialisation and education support these inequalities. Thus, even within sociology, there are different perspectives on society.

Fig. 3.4 The Marxist view of society

ACTIVITY 3.3

Ten definitions of society are listed here. Some of them overlap to a certain extent, some say the same thing in different words and a few are unique. Answer the questions below based on the definitions given.

1. Identify ONE definition of society from the list that you think will be helpful as you continue to deepen your understandings of society and culture. Justify your choice.
2. Select ONE definition that seems to be limited in some way in attempting to define society. Analyse the definition to show what it emphasises and what it downplays. In analysing the definition, to what extent did your opinion change about its limitations?
3. Create your own definition of society (in about three or four lines) that includes all the aspects of society that you deem important.
4. Which definition covers the understanding of 'society' discussed in Box 3.2?

A	All the social relationships found among human beings.
B	A group of people who have mutual interests, certain forms of interaction, characteristic relationships, shared institutions and a common culture.
C	A concept that describes how people who live together as a group develop a commitment to a shared set of norms for living and interacting.
D	A group of people who have developed certain social structures that prescribe appropriate behaviours and relationships.
E	Relationships and arrangements in a group which represent ways of ensuring that members remain loyal to its purposes, shared aims and values by attention to consensus building; for example, through the concept of society as a moral police force.
F	A set of relationships and arrangements in a group which are constantly changing and reconfiguring how social life is organised.
G	Certain norms, values and behaviours characteristic of a people who live in a place and who shaped that space.
H	The set of social relationships that an elite group or groups have organised and try to maintain against the competing interests of other groups.
I	An ideal that we are always striving to achieve in our relationships and arrangements for social life; e.g. the 'good' society.
J	A social system where members share a common history, heritage, language and social institutions, and which occupies a defined geographical space.

BOX 3.2

Scholarly societies

It is ironic (and instructive) that in promoting a particular view of society (and excluding others), scholars in the disciplines portray themselves as a society. The National Geographic Society, the Association of Caribbean Historians or the American Psychological Society provide examples of how disciplines, through their journals, subject associations, conferences and departments attempt to map out their territory of the study of society and establish boundaries with other social science disciplines. In so doing they create a 'society' of scholars and students (an academic community). Commitment to a set of cherished norms and values is fostered through ongoing efforts at refining and outlining their shared interests – a distinctive

body of language and concepts, accepted ways of studying, researching and reporting, and strong opinions about what is considered valid knowledge. In these ways a community of discourse (a society) is built up around a particular discipline based on consensus. This process is continuous as new scholars are always being inducted by the old guard into the concepts and preferred ways of understanding the term 'society' in a particular discipline. Rivalries tend to develop between the different societies representing each discipline, competing for universal recognition that each one is better than the other in the kinds of authentic and unique insights about society that they can generate.

definitions of society. What is emphasised and what is downplayed refer yet again to our growing understanding that people speak about things from their own experience and their own social location, and often ignore the experiences of others. For us, their different definitions serve to question each other and provide a more comprehensive understanding of what 'society' means.



SUMMARY

'Society' has traditionally been defined in static and simple terms. To challenge these ideas, we have mapped out popular perceptions of the term as well as the emphases given by the different disciplines. This strategy tends to yield commonalities across disciplines referring to a composite view of society. We could perhaps use the definition: *a group of people who have interacted over time in a specific place, developing certain shared purposes, goals and senses of belonging that structure their relationships in dynamic ways*. Certain disciplines, such as geography, history and anthropology, focus more on the sociocultural, and from these we get a good picture of how society and culture are embedded in each other. Sociology is the only discipline that seeks to differentiate between the two, stressing the social structure as a fundamental concept of society.

3.1.3 Culture: Multiple Meanings

We can also explore the multiple meanings of the term *culture* through its different definitions. Some emphasise the importance of different behaviours, such as 'learned behaviour common to all human beings', 'norms and values providing a guide to behaviour', or 'institutions which prescribe behaviour'. Others look at the importance of traditions and customs. We begin our study of culture by working through the variety of perspectives that are in popular use, together with a brief glance at those found in the more formal world of academic disciplines.

Popular ways of portraying 'culture'

Culture as 'ways of life'

Perhaps the best-known definition of culture is the one that describes it as the ways of life of a people. People tend to speak in terms of labels, definitions and shorthand ways of describing something, especially if the phenomenon is complex. Ways of worshipping, celebrating, voting, earning a living and interacting with the different social

groups in the country will qualify as the culture of those people in that country. This is an 'omnibus' version of the concept, carrying the understanding that all patterns and processes in which a people engage are eligible to be described as its culture. While this is not wrong, it reduces culture to a set of patterns of behaviour, and this is quite inadequate if we want a deeper understanding.

ACTIVITY 3.4

Examine the questions in the paragraph about culture as ways of life. Suggest the limitations inherent in the definition of culture that reduces it to 'a set of patterns of behaviour' or the ways of life of a people. Use the photographs on page 68 to help you think about this aspect of culture.

Culture as products

Certain terms in everyday use tend to equate culture with cultural *products*. 'Popular culture', 'high culture' or 'elite culture', 'mass culture' and 'global culture' are examples.

- **Popular culture** refers to the music, visual and performing arts, literature, festivals, cuisine, poetry and artistic and designer creations that are promoted mainly through the efforts of the mass media, and even the foreign mass media. Here we see one understanding of culture that tends to get overlooked – that the culture of a people is not necessarily only about things indigenous to them. The term 'mass culture' refers to the lifestyles and values promoted through the mass media. And in this era of globalisation, where through ICTs we are all becoming increasingly like each other, there is talk of a 'global culture'.
- **High culture** is an elitist understanding of culture and was first put forward by Matthew Arnold in the nineteenth century. It refers to values that promote the best thoughts and ideas that human beings have developed and perfected, for beauty, intelligence and truth. Examples are classical ballet, classical (western) music, literature and literary drama, sculpture and the various schools of painting. Human society, on this view, can be transformed by contact with these products of high culture. It is undoubtedly an ethnocentric concept, as it seems to value only the cultural products of western society – primarily the legacies of Greece and Rome, but also of Europe and the European influence in North America. This understanding still persists in statements like 'he is highly cultured', and refers to certain 'refined' tastes or aesthetic accomplishments.

Fig. 3.5 A Hindu wedding ceremony



Fig. 3.6 Orisha ritual with priests in traditional dress in Trinidad



Fig. 3.7 A Spiritual Baptist ritual: sea baptism in Haiti

Culture as ordinary

In 1958 Raymond Williams put forward the view that culture is ordinary. He was opposing both 'the ways of life' and the 'cultural products' view of culture by stressing its symbolic nature. In his view what should be emphasised is the process by which common meanings come to be accepted, debated and modified by people in a society. People develop or do not develop a commitment to the values and norms of their society through contact with them and the varied experiences each has had with them. Thus, culture is ordinary because it develops in every individual according to his or her experiences. In

addition, it is not something that has a tangible existence. Culture is the meanings people have for something, and those meanings are represented in ordinary life through behaviours, acts, rituals, norms, and so on. In this view, culture is not just what is manifest but also the deep personal meanings that ordinary people develop and externalise in different ways. One example of this in 'ordinary' life in the Caribbean is the tendency to crowd around rather than form orderly lines for service. The value of 'first come, first served' is not held in as high regard as the ability to flout rules in getting ahead.

Culture as learned behaviour

This is another very popular way of defining culture – that culture is learned and shared. It improves on the equally popular notion of ‘ways of life of a people’ by focusing not on the specific patterns of behaviour but on how people come to develop those behaviours in the first place. It builds on Williams’s ideas by deepening an understanding of the symbolic.

In this view, people who live together develop symbols that each member has to learn and these symbols represent significant shared meanings for something. Language, gestures, habits, religion, marriage and aspirations act as symbols for a set of shared meanings and values, which for people in that society represents their culture. Language and gestures are easy to understand. A word in any language – for example ‘house’ – bears no real connection to an actual building. The word ‘blue’ could have been used instead. A word is an arbitrary thing with no meaning in and of itself. It is the shared understandings among a people that confer meaning on a word so that it goes without saying what a person means when he or she uses that word. Any word is therefore merely a symbol to represent something, and because its meaning is shared, communication is possible. Different cultures generate different languages, dialects, idioms and even accents.

Learning the shared agreements of a culture, then, is at the heart of how culture is created and maintained. Communication is all-important in how a culture is learned and shared. For a society cultural reproduction becomes a major goal, and this is ensured through different ways of teaching the culture to members so that the shared values and norms are constantly being reproduced. Enculturation describes the process through which we learn culture and is part of the more general process of **socialisation**. Becoming human, then, refers

Socialisation is the continuing process whereby individuals learn the norms and behaviours required of them in society – the process through which, some people believe, we become human.

to learning the rules of the society, many of which are based on the need to have a common understanding of social life. *Diffusion* is another term that describes how culture spreads from one society to another. Migration and the effects of the mass media are two ways by which diffusion can occur.

If culture is a set of learned behaviours, then culture has to pre-date our entry into it. We were born into a society that already had a set of behaviours that were really symbols signifying shared meanings. We had to

learn all the subtle meanings that we as a cultural group shared. For example, growing up in the Caribbean we learned that planting the land was a valuable pursuit, but also, paradoxically, that farmers did not enjoy high social status. If we decided to become farmers we would have to deal with the set of shared meanings for our work that we had learned and opted to reject. Thus, although the ways culture is taught tend to reproduce it, that may not always be the case. The shared meanings are negotiated meanings and these are subject to alteration and change. If, for example, an entire graduating class with BSc qualifications in agriculture went to work as farmers, the shared meanings of who a farmer is would undergo some change.

◆ **Identify what were (and are) the processes through which you learned (and are learning) about your culture.**

Culture as subculture

One way people have of making meaning is to reduce complexity. A popular way of using the term ‘culture’ is to refer to a characteristic set of values and attitudes shared by a specific group or subculture within a larger group. We hear about organisational culture, political culture, an examinations culture, migration culture, and so on. This shows us that for something carrying as many varied and contested meanings as ‘culture’, it is perhaps more meaningful when it is specifically defined and applied to a subculture.

ACTIVITY 3.5

1. Explain what is meant by ‘culture’ in the subcultures listed below:
 - a. drug culture;
 - b. cyber culture;
 - c. literary culture.
2. Is culture a neutral term when applied to subcultures, or does it carry positive or negative connotations?

Focusing on something tangible, however, is often an easy way out in trying to describe phenomena as complex as culture. Running through most of the ways culture is described in popular use is the understanding of having common customs and values and deriving meanings in similar ways. And, while society and culture may seem fused in certain interpretations (for example, high

culture is often associated with high society), there is a strong sense in which culture is believed to be occurring *within* a society. Thus, 'the culture of a society' makes sense, and not vice versa.

Disciplinary perspectives on culture

Geography

The study of the interaction between the physical landscape and human activity invites us to view culture as the ways people have found to adapt, and adapt to, the environment in which they live. In this view, then, a particular location is the important factor in generating culture, and adaptations are the public and shared ways in which culture is manifest. For example, economic activity is directly related to the physical and human resources in a locality, and how such activities are developed and organised depends on the skills and expertise of the people. Thus, agricultural organisation – be it subsistence, peasant or plantation economies – describes a particular way of adapting the skills of people and the possibilities of the landscape. The determinant of culture, then (or what causes it), is the adaptive capacity of the people and the land. There is no real distinction in geography between studying a society and studying its culture.

ACTIVITY 3.6

Geography puts forward an understanding of culture as the adaptations people make. It suggests that what causes culture is the natural environment. Discuss these claims, paying attention to the following:

1. If culture is caused by the environment and culture is the adaptations people make, how did the people living in a certain environment know to make those adaptations?
2. What may be some other causes of culture?

History

Periodisation is the main emphasis of history. 'Ways of adapting' or 'ways of life' or 'shared meanings' are studied, but under the guise of politics, religious organisation, diplomacy, economic activity or any other aspect of social life in a specific historical period or periods. And they are studied in terms of the social forces and processes evident in society that are changing these aspects of social life over time. History therefore studies culture as an aspect of social organisation. Well-defined segments of cultural history, such as the Baroque or the Romantic, are usually attached to their social equivalents in a particular period, although that period may vary

from country to country. Thus, although the historian for the most part does not specifically focus on culture, he or she is studying culture when the focus is on the political system or social developments associated with it, for example, and how specific cultures have changed and adapted over time.

◆ **If this is the view of culture from history, what causes culture – what causes the adaptations, changes or lack of change to take place?**

A specific section of history, effectively a branch of science, looks at culture in quite a different way, at its role in human evolution. This touches on two views we have already encountered – that culture is learned and shared, and that it is adaptive. Culture knowledge enabled humans to survive over millennia in that technical and other knowledge was passed on to each new generation, who adapted and improved upon it. Evolutionary biology cites culture (mainly language, facilitating communication) as the major factor enabling early humans to survive in greater numbers, enjoy better health and develop physical attributes that made them better able to protect and reproduce themselves, compared with other creatures.

Here again we see an understanding of culture as an adaptive mechanism. The popular view that culture is learned and shared seems to be a necessary first step, though, in understanding culture as an adaptive mechanism rather than a separate and different explanation. However, we need to turn to another discipline, anthropology, to understand the processes whereby culture becomes an adaptive mechanism.

Anthropology

People usually summarise the work of anthropologists as 'the study of everything pertaining to a society', and this includes two of its main branches – social anthropology and cultural anthropology.

Anthropologists study all societies from the earliest to the present day. While their work overlaps with that of the sociologist, they tend to keep their focus on culture because it is an important way that societies are differentiated from each other. However, because culture is a contested concept, hard to tie down in its overall form, anthropologists have found it necessary to subdivide it into specific areas for specialised study. For example, some anthropologists study material culture – the objects that a group produces and which differ significantly from the material culture of other groups. These artefacts include



Fig. 3.8 Conversation

clothing, art in its various expressions, architecture, fashion, technological products, utensils and the products known as ‘popular culture’. For example, the groupings of the earliest Caribbean peoples such as the Ostionoid and Barrancoid (Chapter 2) are differentiated based on what they have left of their material culture.

Another branch of anthropology looks at the ideas, beliefs, values, assumptions and behaviours of a people, referred to as its non-material or symbolic culture, which includes language and other characteristic forms of interaction. This subdivision of culture focuses on the meaning systems that a group has for the symbols mentioned above. Within the meaning system is what anthropologists call a group’s ‘ideal culture’ (the ideal values and norms of that society) and its ‘real culture’

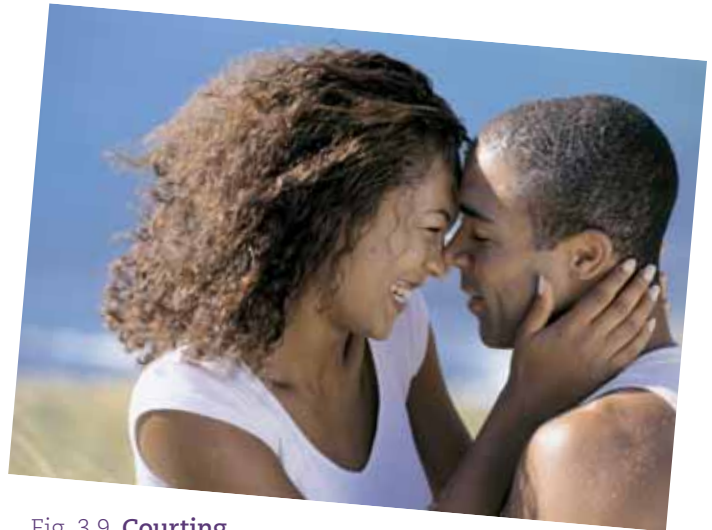


Fig. 3.9 Courting

(actual behaviours, which may fall short of its ideals). Thus, a society may value democracy and have symbols and practices to uphold it, such as general elections. Yet some groups, perhaps marginalised groups, remain persistently unrepresented. The meaning system for democracy in that culture includes both the ideal and a recognition that it is not being realised for all.

Clifford Geertz put forward an understanding of culture as the interpretation of meaning systems. He emphasised the signs or symbols that we learn, share and adapt in everyday life (our acts and behaviours like those shown in Figs 3.8–3.11). He also introduced the concept of webs of significance. A person exists within a context of different layers or webs of meaning, which he or she has helped to spin and which have significance for him or her.



Fig. 3.10 A schoolroom



Fig. 3.11 A family outing

This is not a view from the outside. It deliberately seeks the perspectives of the group being studied. According to Geertz, people choose from a set of **values**

Values refer to how something is ranked or judged. For example, theft may be regarded negatively and punctuality is rewarded.

and beliefs (Box 3.3) that can be interpreted by other members of the community.

People choose their behaviours based on how they interpret the set of values and beliefs that are meaningful and intelligible to other members. Common systems of meanings thus exist, but they are continually created and recreated because culture is adaptive.

ACTIVITY 3.7

Using the understanding of culture put forward by Geertz, discuss the significance of a decision by someone of marriageable age not to get married. The following questions address different aspects of this topic and may be helpful in the discussion.

1. Would this decision be interpreted differently depending on whether the person not wishing to get married was male or female?
2. What are images and social constructions of the 'married' or 'unmarried'?
3. Why are there so many acts, ceremonies, rituals and practices associated with marriage?
4. What are the underlying values and beliefs in your society about marriage?

BOX 3.3

Beliefs and values

We have seen that at the heart of culture is a set of beliefs and values. It is these beliefs and values that confer meanings on any act or behaviour. Because people share common understandings based on common beliefs and values they are able to interpret each other's acts and behaviours intelligibly. In another culture such acts and behaviours may have altogether different meanings because they are based on a different set of values and beliefs. To understand what causes culture we therefore need to acquire a deeper understanding of beliefs and values.

Beliefs

To have a belief is to have deep faith and trust in something. There is utter conviction and confidence that what the belief says is certain. One can count on it. There are many kinds of beliefs that you may be able to identify in the culture of schooling, for example, such as:

- high marks in school show that one is 'bright' or 'intelligent';
- certain types of schools are 'better' than others;
- certain subjects are more important than others.

Examples drawn from different aspects of life in society show how beliefs are deeply embedded in how we live our lives:

- If a family goes to church every Sunday, this shows that they are basically 'good' people.
- Someone without a job and not actively looking for one is at risk of a host of negative consequences.
- Motherhood is a state far more sacred, precious and cherished than fatherhood, or being childless.

- Visiting friends or relatives where we are not offered food or drink signifies that something is wrong – they are being either mean or unfriendly for some reason.

Values

You will have noticed that it is extremely difficult to speak of beliefs without bringing in values. In each of the examples above there is a value involved. Values refer to how some quality, act, behaviour, disposition, image, and so on, is ranked by people sharing a culture. We have a system of values that is really a set of beliefs ranking certain things (qualities, acts, behaviours, dispositions, images) as better than others. Thus, going to church regularly is highly regarded, as is being gainfully employed. Motherhood is beset with so many positive beliefs and values that fathers (and women who do not have children) feel that they are almost discriminated against by the dominant beliefs and values of their society.

There is also a strong belief among Caribbean people that we must show hospitality to our friends, neighbours and relatives. This rests on values that cherish family life, friendship and camaraderie, an ethic of helping others, as well as the desire to look good in the eyes of others. We also seem to value oral communication a great deal, and humour, so that visitors give us a chance to talk and make jokes as we relax. The significance placed on visiting friends and relatives as regularly as we can is based on all the values mentioned above. You may note, though, that visiting friends and relatives is becoming less important as we become more and more enmeshed in the cultures of today's urban living and influences from abroad. Thus, values undergo change.

Culture, then, is the context in which people interact within webs of significance. Living in these webs means that one is continually interpreting signs and symbols – language, gestures, habits, ceremonies, rites of passage (for example, going to school) or shopping. Definitions of culture which say that it is learned, shared or adaptive need a deeper explication, possibly through greater attention to the meaning systems in which people are embedded. Thus, a deeper representation of culture will emphasise how people actively interpret it according to some meaning system (values and beliefs) that is publicly intelligible. Values and beliefs, then, seem to be at the heart of culture.

Sociology

Sociology sees culture as a social phenomenon. In other words, various explanations of culture have different emphases because of the difference in social location between groups. There are three aspects to this:

1. Reducing complexity. In defining culture, complexity is glossed over in favour of short, precise, all-encompassing statements like ‘ways of life’, ‘learned behaviour’, ‘shared meanings’ and ‘adaptive mechanisms’. While these statements seem to summarise a lot, they need to be deconstructed to understand their usefulness – and their limitations. However, most people feel they understand the summary version and do not need to explore in-depth explanations of culture. In addition, notions of change and dynamism are not evident in these statements, except for ‘adaptive mechanism’.

‘High culture’, ‘mass culture’ and ‘global culture’ refer to art, creative expressions, artefacts, media and technology, and are attempts to understand culture through its products. However, the attempts do not really get off the ground as the processes behind their production are not examined. Similarly, attempts to simplify culture by pinpointing only some aspects of social life for study – for example, the drug culture, student culture, the culture of poverty – are clearly saying that studying the culture concept is too large and unwieldy an undertaking. In trying to understand the social and its impact on ‘culture’, what we see are clear attempts to simplify complexity in various ways.

2. Social constructions. Sociologists acknowledge that culture exists in a social context and inevitably people will construct a view of culture that takes into account the interaction and relationships of social groups. There are those who see culture as reflecting

social life, as a mirror of the society. In this view, culture has a structural dimension in that it is the social structure which is seen to generate (or cause) the kind of culture experienced by different social groups. For example, the rich and famous will experience a different culture from that of the poor. Thus, ‘high culture’, ‘mass culture’ and the ‘culture of poverty’ are social constructions of culture built up by those who emphasise social distinction in explaining culture.

3. Multiple perspectives. A variety of perspectives exists about almost any issue. We also know that persons can hold multiple and conflicting views of reality. Attempts to understand culture that recognise this social context must acknowledge variation, complexity, change and interaction. Thus, explanations themselves will be complex because what they are attempting to do is to understand how people make meaning, how they interpret their actions and those of others, and how they communicate meaning. Explanations of culture that stress the symbolic – for example, ‘ordinary culture’, ‘non-material culture’ and ‘webs of significance’ – show that culture is not easy to understand, mainly because our understanding of social interaction prevents us from seeing it clearly.

Attaching meanings and deriving understandings is not straightforward, yet we all do it. What are the processes we put ourselves through in order to interpret our actions and those of other people? If we can identify such processes then we can come close to a complex understanding of culture.

ACTIVITY 3.8

Let us examine an aspect of our own culture, for example drinking alcohol.

- 1.** Reflect on how you came to hold the values and beliefs you do about drinking.
- 2.** Identify some of the mainstream views about drinking in your society. If you hold minority or unpopular views, explain how as an individual you can derive meanings that are at odds with how others derive meanings and interpret ‘drinking’.
- 3.** If you do not have any strong views on drinking alcohol, whether for yourself or for others, do you still think that you hold values and beliefs about drinking? If an anthropologist were trying to understand the significance of your views in studying the culture of your society, how would you explain your interpretation of ‘drinking’?

The main objective of this activity was to engage you in trying to unravel the webs of meaning in which you are enmeshed and which you have helped to spin. It may have helped somewhat to deepen your understandings of yourself as a social being and it certainly would have shown that the study of culture, and attempts to define it or unravel it to unearth its processes, meet only with partial success. Although we will have to give explanations of culture from time to time, we should be aware that such explanations speak of it largely in a finished and complete way, as if fully understanding culture was something that was even possible. When anthropologists have completed a study of some culture, they know that they have not captured as much as they would have liked, and what is even more intriguing is that, in helping you to understand their culture, people are limited by their own social location.

Feminism

One of the most obvious ways in which our culture affects us is that it is **gendered**. This aspect of culture

A **gendered** society uses the biological division between men and women as the basis for their social roles.

pervades virtually all societies, whether or not they are overtly **patriarchal**. In the Caribbean, for example, men

A **patriarchal** society is one where men are dominant.

traditionally were cast as breadwinners and heads of household, where women looked after the children and the home. In actual fact these roles have never been strictly adhered to – women have always earned money to supplement household income, and many were (and are) heads of their household. Indeed, Caribbean societies are often referred to as *matrifocal* because the focus of the family is on the matriarch or senior woman (see Box 6.1, page 143).

Feminism is a movement that grew up in the 1960s in the belief that **patriarchy** should be contested, and

Patriarchy means 'rule by the father' and descent and inheritance are reckoned in the male line.

women given more opportunities with regard to careers and life choices.

Feminists draw attention to the so-called *glass ceiling* that prevents women from rising above a certain level in an organisation. They also call for better provision of childcare and maternity leave to help women to carry on with their careers after giving birth or return to work more easily if they have chosen to concentrate on full-time motherhood for a period.

Sociology, anthropology and history have all acquired feminist practitioners, and in sociology there are a number of feminist perspectives, including radical feminism, liberal feminism, Marxist feminism and black feminism, each with their own special focus. Feminists generally see both society and culture as undervaluing the contributions of women, both historically and in contemporary society. They also view traditional forms of femininity and masculinity as problematic, causing both men and women to feel constrained by received ideas of how they should behave, and even how they should feel. Men are often made to feel unmasculine, for example if they wish to be more involved in childrearing, or scorned if they decide to take on the homemaking role to enable a spouse to continue with her career.

As we close this section, let us consider some of the different levels at which people speak about culture. You will be able to recognise and categorise some of the statements in Table 3.1 based on the different perspectives on culture that we have already explored in this chapter.

ACTIVITY 3.9

Suppose that you are an anthropologist or sociologist who has to analyse the following statements that people have made about someone's culture. Match each statement in Table 3.1 opposite with what you consider an appropriate analysis based on the understanding of culture being expressed. (Answers are on page 79.)



SUMMARY

We have tended to build social constructions of culture emphasising a static, straightforward and uniform portrayal. Deeper investigations of culture, largely through disciplinary perspectives such as anthropology and sociology, try to explicate its symbolic nature. The symbolic can easily accommodate the traditional understandings of culture as 'ways of life', 'shared meanings', 'learned behaviours' and as an 'adaptive mechanism' because all rely on an interpretation and communication of meanings. Those meanings, however, seem to be generated by sets of beliefs and values that give significance to something. It is these beliefs and values that encourage a society to adapt, change or stand still. Beliefs and values, then, are at the heart of culture.

Table 3.1 Analysing statements about culture

DESCRIPTION OF CULTURE		ANALYSIS	
1	'Those children only interested in wearing fancy footwear, nothing else.'	A	This description of culture enters into the shared meanings attached to an act. It goes on to describe how the person feels from an insider's perspective by referring to his or her 'webs of significance'.
2	'Among youth having things that others value gives them social capital – prestige.'	B	This description of culture merely states a behaviour. It can be used as an example of 'ways of life'.
3	'The latest and most expensive sneakers make the wearer feel good, successful and capable of success.'	C	This description goes a step further where someone gives a theory about why people act the way they do. It is still a view from the outside. It could be an example of an understanding of culture as the 'shared meanings' people have for something.



3.2 Caribbean 'society' and 'culture' in the Caribbean and the diaspora

Let us now apply what we have learned about 'society' and 'culture' in the previous sections to analysing the ways that Caribbean society and culture have been portrayed. Scholars have studied Caribbean social life and attempted to capture what they believe are the important aspects of its society and culture.

3.2.1 Many Views of Caribbean Society

Table 3.2 lists a selection of views attempting to portray Caribbean society, and hence its culture. There are many other views; one that is widely respected is Beckford's analysis of Caribbean society as a plantation society (see Chapter 2). Examining the statements in Table 3.2 we see repeated references to the beliefs and values of Caribbean people. For example, Caribbean people are variously described as valuing ethnocentric, indigenous, creolised

and separatist beliefs. Our earlier discussions (Box 3.3) led us to reason that beliefs and values were at the heart of culture. At this point, though, we come close to uncomfortably deep questions about culture. For example, if we have beliefs and values, why are they ethnocentric or creolised, or even separatist?

ACTIVITY 3.10

Examine each of the statements in Table 3.2, keeping in mind our previous attempts to map out the terms 'society' and 'culture'. Then answer the questions. This activity could be done in pairs, groups or as a class discussion.

1. 'Although this list shows various labels for Caribbean "society", it is really "culture" that is emphasised.' Discuss the significance of this statement.
2. In the statements listed, identity seems to be an issue in describing Caribbean society and culture. Explain why 'identity' is an important component of a society and culture.
3. If values and beliefs form the core of a culture, suggest how the shared beliefs and values evident in Caribbean society and culture were formed.

Table 3.2 Portrayals of Caribbean society

AUTHOR	PORTRAYALS OF CARIBBEAN SOCIETY
Vidia Naipaul	'The Caribbean, and Trinidad in particular, has "no society". The people are transients...' (<i>The Loss of El Dorado</i>). '[They] have created nothing of value and are always hankering after what others have.' (<i>The Mimic Men</i>)
Derek Walcott	'Ours is a creative society and uniquely so. There is nothing like what we will and can create.'
Edward Kamau Brathwaite	'Caribbean society is a creole society. Different social groups came here from elsewhere. They met, mixed, developed, transformed and changed their original ways of interacting.'
R.T. Smith	'Plural society exists in the Caribbean where different ethnic groups met but led separate lives under an ethic of toleration.'

We met this debate earlier when certain disciplines such as history and geography attempted to offer the determinants of culture. This is when people try to explain the causes of culture – why do we hold the beliefs and values we do, and how do our beliefs and values shape how we adapt and what we adapt?

Beckford's portrayal of Caribbean society as a plantation society emphasises its social structure. It analyses the characteristics of, and relationships between, the various social groups. For example, it shows that there is an unwillingness by the elites to allow other social groups to access social mobility. Groups of similar ethnicity, wealth, status or education level intermarry and associate with each other rather than with other groups. It can be thought of as a Marxist view of social relations as all the patterns and relationships are dominated by the ideas and values of the elites. The poorer classes do not have the power to challenge these interactions and usually comply with such arrangements, often not seeing how they are being deprived.

Although this view admits that change has occurred and is occurring, it tends to emphasise a static social structure suggestive of the colonial era. The notion of dynamism and change is also underemphasised in certain other views of society, as portrayed in Table 3.2 for example, plural society or no society. Beckford's analysis views culture as mirroring social structure. Thus, the culture of the elites will differ from the culture of those at different socioeconomic levels in the society. The values and beliefs of each group occupying a particular socioeconomic level will reflect their social location. For example, beliefs and values are at work in matters such as marriage and occupation, where those who enjoy privileged status seek to bring only those they favour into profitable alliances. They have the power to hire and fire and the criteria they use are often linked to beliefs and values attached to caste and class.

A consistent belief among lower socioeconomic groups in society is that social mobility is necessary to live a better life. Thus, we are familiar with parents working very hard to secure a higher standard of living for their children. These beliefs and values seem to stem directly from the menial positions that their ancestors were forced to endure in the colonial era. Among the wealthier classes, beliefs and values do not necessarily focus on working hard and self-sacrifice but on strategies to consolidate their position and exclude others.

However, precisely because we find many questions about culture to be quite unanswerable, we need to engage in continuing dialogue to clarify what we can, rather than take it for granted that we know all about

it. Activity 3.11 focuses on several issues related to the creation of culture which, as Caribbean people trying to better understand ourselves and our region, we should deliberately debate and ponder.

ACTIVITY 3.11

This is a debating exercise. Each statement can be used for a separate debate where students construct arguments that can uphold or reject the position in the statement.

1. Our culture is really an amalgam of beliefs and values arising from our historical and geographical experiences.
2. Our culture arises from our identity.
3. Our culture is what causes us to be creative and adapt or to not do so.
4. Our culture is being recreated every day.

Having gone through the debate of Activity 3.11 you should be better prepared to interpret the insights offered by Nettleford (2004) in Activity 3.12 (opposite). You can, for instance, compare some of your key ideas from Activity 3.11 about how culture is created with the connections that Nettleford makes. Although the ineffable nature of culture remains, you will have a sense of making some headway in understanding the concept of culture.

Culture is a social phenomenon. One cannot keep the concepts 'society' and 'culture' apart for very long, although we have been attempting to do just that in this chapter in order to clarify what each means.

3.2.2 Cultural Sensitivity

The view is sometimes expressed that understanding culture helps us to better understand our society. What does this mean? What have we understood about culture so far that can help us to clarify this statement?

First, we have seen that culture is ineffable, indescribable and elusive when we attempt a study of it and try to define and explain it. We never seem to truly grasp it. Secondly, we are constantly fielding social constructions, varied perspectives and attempts to simplify it. Thus, what we understand of it is conditioned by our social location and relationships.

If we are unclear about it, then, it is these unclear understandings of our own culture that we use to view and assess the culture of others, and that we use to try to understand our own. Outsiders too have a similar problem in trying to understand our culture because they have to do so through the lens of their own culture. It is interesting to note that anthropologists who go to live in certain cultures to study them better find that

ACTIVITY 3.12**Document study**

Read the passage and then answer the questions below.

The clear and established 'Caribbean expressions', which have been the subject of anthropological investigation and tourist curiosity and have served as mild entertainments for an outside world that expects minstrelsy from exotic climes, must now be seriously put into perspective. For in contemporary life, identity goes beyond jump-up and calypso, beyond reggae, and beyond exteriorities of dreadlocks, red-green-and-gold woollen cap and the smoking of marijuana as a sacrament, regarded by many as the essence of exotica Caribbeana.

It goes, in fact, into the interiorities of self-determination, sovereignty (both territorial and cultural) and independence for individuals and nations alike. And it is precisely for this reason that the centuries of popular cultural expression by the mass of the population, who were always central to the process of creolisation or indigenisation, must be taken into account. After all, it is that historical experience which now informs existential reality, giving to the Caribbean well-articulated parameters of concern in building nations and shaping societies as part of a still-emerging civilisation.

Contemporary identity in Caribbean terms must therefore take into consideration not only the notions or theories that have been employed to articulate, explain and comprehend the phenomenon itself, but also the divisive forces of geography, colonisation and the distinctive 'culture-spheres' resulting from the geo-politics of superpower rivalry over centuries of plantation slavery and mercantilist greed.

(Source: Nettleford, 2004, pp 544–545)

1. According to the popular conceptions of culture that were outlined earlier in this chapter, identify those which seem to fit Nettleford's claims about how Caribbean culture has been regarded by others.
2. List some of the beliefs and values that Nettleford thinks should inform identity.
3. What part do history and geography seem to play in the creation of culture and identity?

the longer they stay and become comfortable, the more difficult it is to make insightful observations.

What such understandings confer is a degree of 'cultural sensitivity' that enables us to better understand the society. For example, if we examine any issue in our society today we see that there are competing views from different social groups. We must hold back the urge to pronounce a judgement on the views of others, while we acknowledge our imperfect cultural understandings, as well as that others (and ourselves) act from their own social location. Thus, issues of religion, youth, race and ethnicity, which appear in the society from time to time, can be better understood if we do not judge and assess from our individual viewpoint as if it were the only reference point in resolving the issue. Such cultural sensitivity can only come about through a study of culture and the recognition that we are hampered in finding out much about it because we are too deeply embedded in it. Yet it is all that we have to help us understand our society.

Anthropologists call for us to 'understand our understandings', meaning that we should attempt to acknowledge how partial and incomplete they are. A good way of checking this is to reflect on the views of people in the society about a topical issue, perhaps in the newspapers or on talk shows. You will notice that among those who do not have a well-developed sense of cultural

sensitivity there are strong views based on the person's social location and experience. There is no recognition that they may have only a partial view; rather they give the impression that what they believe is right and others should recognise how right they are.

Someone who is less certain that they have a thorough understanding, or the only true and correct understanding of the issue, will make a greater effort in trying to make sense of oppositional views based on the nature of culture. They will be able to consider what they know of the beliefs and values of a group and reflect on how they are conditioned by time and place, by conflict, by consensus and by change. They will be increasingly wary of statements that declare a bias as if it were an unshakable truth – for example, 'the government does not help poor people', 'you have to know somebody to get a job', 'Muslim groups in society have a hidden agenda', 'the US is the greatest country on earth', 'voodoo is hocus-pocus', 'homosexuals are vile', and so on.

An orientation based in cultural sensitivity enables you to see that nothing is a 'given'. Everything should be challenged to determine as best as we can the extent to which someone in the grip of their own beliefs and values is relating to others in ways that suggest that these beliefs and values are universal and are a 'given'. If such is the case among groups in the society, then communication

closes down. No one will be able to hear what others are saying because what is said will be screened through a set of beliefs and values deemed to be superior.

The student of culture, however, brings a certain awareness to an understanding of issues in the society that is conditioned by the very nature of culture. It is so elusive, some say, that all we see is the tip of the iceberg, yet we all live in it, act on it and are quite comfortable with it. Thus we lead a somewhat ambiguous existence. If we are prepared to admit that we live out acts, beliefs and values that we ourselves understand imperfectly, then we are better able to deal sensitively with issues in the society as they arise, and in so doing deepen our own understandings.



SUMMARY

When we analyse some of the ways in which Caribbean 'society' and 'culture' have been portrayed, we see that some representations reflect the social location of the writer and some reduce complexity so that only certain aspects, for example creativity, are emphasised. As students attempting to understand Caribbean society and culture, the many perspectives are valuable, because for us they represent different dimensions of a phenomenon. We have also learned that while we may separate the study of 'society' from 'culture' in attempting to get a clearer picture of each concept, when we apply it to a specific place we find that in reality they are embedded in each other. Thus, to study Caribbean society means to study its culture.



Wrap Up

Traditional definitions of 'society' and 'culture' tend to give us an unreal picture of these concepts because of our habitual ways of regarding knowledge. Instead we need to realise that our definitions tend to downplay the variety of perspectives that exist, reducing meanings to those of our own social location, and employing social constructions which we then proceed to regard as facts. To develop a more authentic understanding of each of these concepts, both have been considered in all their complexity. This analysis has revealed the concepts as having more dynamism than was apparent in traditional definitions. It has also showed that definitions tend to give the impression that one can know all about something, but the study of culture has revealed its ineffable aspects – for example, how do beliefs and values form in the first place? Finally, specific portrayals of Caribbean society and culture have shown that in real life both concepts are deeply embedded in each other. Thus, the strategy used in this chapter, of studying the two separately, was only useful in order to deepen understanding and awareness of both concepts.

Research TOPICS

Conceptions of religion and culture

The following is suggested as a research topic that you may wish to conduct. It is based on the theme of religion, emphasising ideas related to understanding society and culture.

In this chapter you have come across several levels and different ways in which culture is understood. Using religion as a focus you can interview several persons (or you may use a questionnaire) to find out what ideas they have on the relationship between religion in the society and culture. For example, in an interview your main question might be:

'When religion is described as an aspect of the culture of a country, what does that mean?'

This will be a **qualitative** type of study (that is, one that elicits what people feel, think or believe) and it may take your respondents quite a while to compose an answer as it is a complex issue. Their varied responses should give you a cross section of views of what people think culture is (through the lens of religion). You can use the various definitions and emphases highlighted in the chapter to organise their responses. You will want to be able to summarise their points of view and then categorise them according to the ways in which people describe or explain culture. You may also display or present the data as verbatim quotes which will show the spread of ideas.

Your findings may lead you to reflect on what people tend to think about culture and the extent to which that may be problematic for Caribbean societies. For instance, there may be a lot of disagreement about what culture actually is, and as a researcher reflecting on the findings, you will want to discuss the implications for multicultural Caribbean states.

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Practice Tests

Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Define society. (1 mark)
(b) Define culture. (1 mark)
(c) Identify TWO reasons why it is difficult to separate the two concepts, 'society' and 'culture'. (4 marks)
- 2 Give TWO criticisms of the definition of society as 'a group of people living in an area for a long time'. (4 marks)
- 3 (a) Suggest TWO reasons to explain why definitions of culture are often inadequate. (4 marks)
(b) Explain what is meant by the term 'sociocultural'. (2 marks)
- 4 (a) Identify TWO cultural acts or behaviours in Caribbean society. (2 marks)
(b) Explain why EACH act or behaviour you identified is 'cultural'. (4 marks)
- 5 (a) Identify TWO ways in which Caribbean writers have described Caribbean society and its culture. (2 marks)
(b) Distinguish between material and non-material culture. (4 marks)
- 6 (a) Explain what is meant by (i) 'the information society'; and (ii) 'the learning society'. (4 marks)
(b) Identify ONE other theory of society that has been described in the Caribbean context and state its main tenets. (2 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Examine different understandings of the term 'society' and give a reasoned account of what aspects should be included in a definition of society.
- 2 Explain the differences and areas of overlap in the terms 'society' and 'culture'.
- 3 Identify the definitions of society and culture that you think are appropriate for a study of Caribbean society and culture.

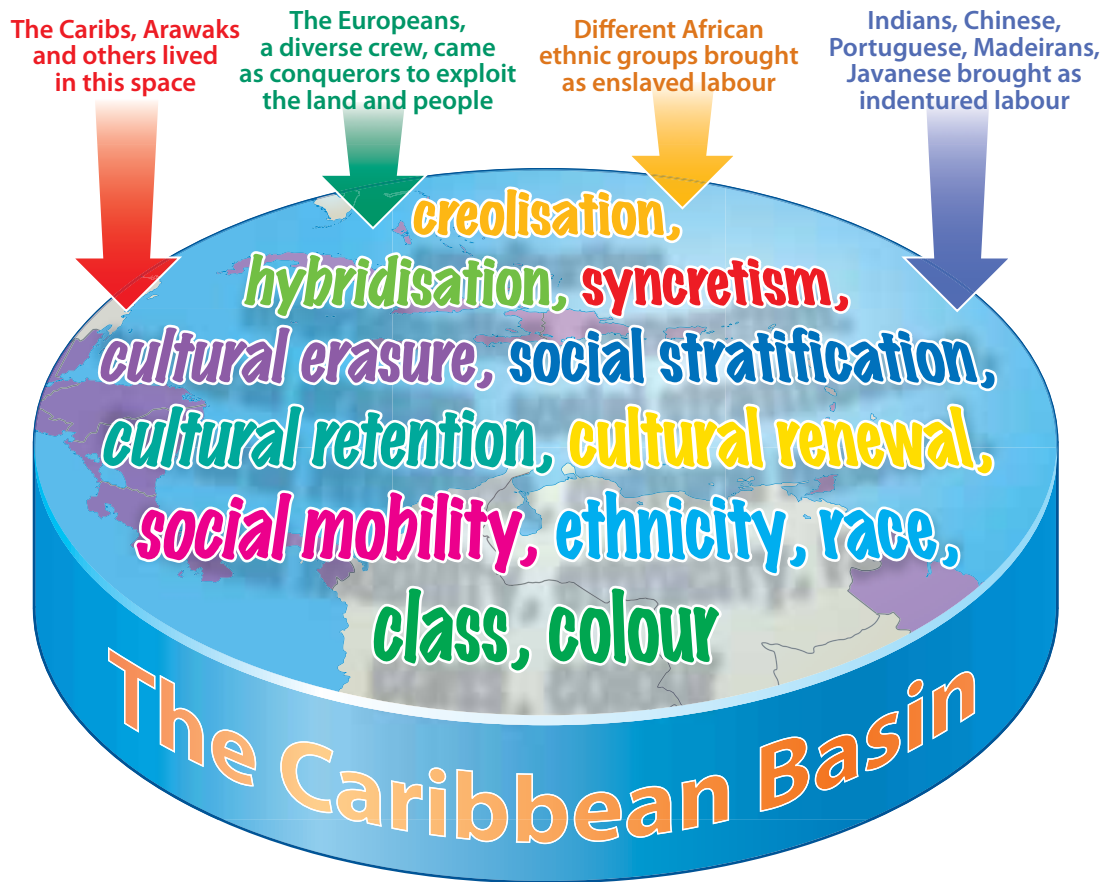
Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 Discuss the complexity of the culture concept by analysing and comparing TWO portrayals of Caribbean society and culture.
- 2 Discuss the statement that 'there is no one Caribbean culture but many cultures'.
- 3 To what extent do Caribbean people in the diaspora still belong to Caribbean society?

Answers to Activity 3.9: 1(B), 2(A), 3(C).

4

Identity and Social Formation



An ever-present debate rages about Caribbean society and culture. Some say that the region is so culturally diverse that reference to a Caribbean consciousness or a Caribbean culture, or even a Caribbean region, exists only in the imagination. Another equally strong view refers to the common historical experiences forged in colonisation – genocide, slavery, the plantation system, indentureship – and later migration, independence and attempts at regional integration. This is perhaps the most enigmatic thing about Caribbean society and culture – that there is so much difference amidst admittedly common experiences. We will explore this debate by investigating how ethnicity, hybridisation, cultural change, social stratification and social mobility impact on cultural diversity and identity in Caribbean society and culture.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. explain terms such as creolisation, cultural diversity, hybridisation, social stratification and social mobility;
2. examine diversity and commonality in the Caribbean;
3. understand the Caribbean as a shared and defined territorial space;
4. identify and explain the way in which racial admixtures have impacted on Caribbean social and cultural forms;
5. analyse the phenomenon of cultural change and continuity;
6. discuss the issue of identity and cultural diversity from a historical viewpoint.

4.1

Cultural diversity

4.1.1 Culture is Diverse

When people use the term *cultural diversity* we get a clear picture that differences are being emphasised. As we saw in Chapter 3, social constructions sometimes obscure the meanings of terms, and this is the case with ‘cultural diversity’. However, culture is diverse, wherever it occurs. People interpret their culture and act from their social location, so that even if the ethnicity of a society seems to be homogeneous, that does not necessarily mean that its culture is uniform.

ACTIVITY 4.1

Reflect on your own culture, as an example. You are a bearer of your culture. And so is your brother, and so is your neighbour down the road. But you do not live it and experience it in the same way. Suppose you are a Jamaican, then you belong to an ethnic group based on nationality. However, you may differ from your neighbour by virtue of ‘race’; that is an ethnic difference that may influence how you live and experience Jamaican culture. Perhaps, within your family, one member has chosen to join the Rastafari. Then you will also differ based on ethnic categories of religion, traditions and customs (§4.1.2 below). On the other hand, suppose you lived in a neighbourhood where everyone is black, middle class and professional. Do you think that because people belong to the same ethnic categories of colour, class and occupation that they live and experience the culture in the same way?

Often when we talk and think about complex issues we simplify matters and polarise them into neat categories. With culture, people tend to focus on either similarities or differences. The black, middle-class professionals we considered in Activity 4.1 would be generalised as having some similar behaviours to typify them. This is easier to do than to search out how they genuinely live their lives and what beliefs and values they actually hold. If we had a view of culture that focused not only on the beliefs and values people share, but also on their unique ways of expressing and experiencing these beliefs and values, even interpreting them, then it would not be so easy to have an image of culture as something that is uniform and unvarying.

In spite of its non-scientific foundation, the concept of race is, however, an ever-present phenomenon in social life and is thus a social construction. In our societies we have accustomed ways of classifying and labelling people and these categories have a semblance of solidity because we all more or less agree on the categories, or we know what someone means when they use them. This is known as ‘social race’, to underscore the notion that we have created the categories based largely on phenotype.

Using a three-way classification in the Caribbean we see that the pre-Columbian or aboriginal peoples had distinct physical characteristics that distinguished them from the European invaders. They were categorised as Mongoloid and the Europeans were said to belong to the Caucasoid racial grouping. The Africans were then added, bringing Negroid racial characteristics to the region. Those are the main racial groupings. Any group coming afterwards were seen as representing some subgrouping of the races already present. Thus, the

BOX 4.1**The phenomenon of 'race'**

Biology was used in the past as a scientific way of differentiating the races. One racial group was separated from another using criteria supposedly based on genetic inheritance – distinctive hair, eye and skin colour, as well as other facial characteristics, and perhaps height and stature. However, these physical characteristics seem to occur along a continuum, as over time the ancestors met and mated with other groups who are no longer in the picture. There is no telling what is in the gene pool! During colonial times Europeans thought that the different races – Negroid (peoples of African origin), Caucasoid (European and Semitic peoples) and Mongoloid (Asiatic peoples) – belonged in a hierarchy with (of course) the Europeans on top. Much scientific thought and research was wasted on the phenotypes of the different races and their supposed significance.

Negroid, Caucasoid and Mongoloid are the best-known racial categories that have been used to classify the world's peoples on the basis of physical appearance. This classification, though, cannot accommodate the Australian aboriginal peoples and those of mixed heritage, so a large array of subtypes and subcategories had to be created. In addition, the varieties of people who did occur within one category or racial type were bewildering. Most importantly, no consistent scientific way has been found to justify this classification – for example, by blood type, cell structure, and the like. And so, after a century or two of intense scientific investigations, there appears to be no consistent biological difference among the races that can be used to name and distinguish them. 'Race' has, it appears, no existence in biology.

Chinese and Indians are also categorised as Mongoloids, and the Syrians, Jews and Lebanese (who are more recent immigrants) are Caucasoid. These categories are not very meaningful as all these people vary a great deal in appearance.

When we say that cultural diversity is extremely marked in the Caribbean because of the many races and racial groupings that are present, this use of the term is really based on categories of 'social race' and can better be described as 'ethnicity'. Sometimes we use 'race' as a synonym for nationality or genealogy. Thus, if we speak of the 'Indian race' we are identifying a group of people who are linked through bloodlines and kin (genealogy) and who reside in a particular geographical area. In this case, it is more accurate to speak of ethnicity than race. And that may well be the case for most discussions that focus on 'race', because it is an ill-defined social phenomenon (see Box 4.1).

4.1.2 Cultural Diversity and Ethnicity

Cultural groups are identified using several criteria, such as race, colour, religion, heritage and language. Cultural differences are usually referred to as 'ethnic' differences. Other cultural dimensions are also used to differentiate groups – for example, wealth, kin, education, urban or rural residence – but these are more like fine distinctions laid upon already existing differences. Groups do not necessarily differ according to only one characteristic, say race. For example,

people may be of the same race but of different religions. 'Ethnicity' refers to social and cultural 'belongingness' – the ties that bind people who see themselves as similar in some way, and who regularly interact.

Ethnic groups can be based on race, though many times this is not very meaningful. Lumping together whole groups of people who may look similar as belonging to one ethnic category based on race is fraught with difficulty. For example, the British and French may be of the same race but culturally they are quite distinct. And for many the race factor may be less important than the cultural life they share with others. People of African descent (or Negroid ancestry) comprise the largest racial grouping in the Caribbean. It is difficult to differentiate by sight between an African person from Guyana and one from Barbados, but they may belong to different cultural groups, have certain ideas, values and beliefs that are similar to those of people in their nation-state, who are not necessarily African. They therefore belong to different ethnic groups based on nationality although they belong to one racial grouping. Thus, ethnic categories overlap in ways that may be indecipherable to people from outside the region.

And we must also be aware of the many who are of mixed descent and identify with, say, their African origins, even though their physical characteristics may proclaim otherwise. Further, people of mixed race may not identify with any one race, may actually discount

race as important to them, and may actually feel more comfortable belonging to an ethnic group that celebrates their nationality – for example, being Belizean rather than mestizo. In addition, there are African people who identify more closely with Africa as a homeland and are therefore culturally or ethnically different from other people of African descent in the society. The Maroons, the Bush Negroes and the Rastafarians are all ethnic communities that are mainly of African descent but their cultural practices and beliefs set them apart. Cultural diversity deepens immensely when you realise that there may be, as in Suriname, different Maroon groups, with their own traditions, customs and languages.

If we look at the Amerindian groups of Guyana we find a similar situation. They have recognisable physical traits or features but belong to very different ethnic groups because of their cultural heritage and geographical location. There are about nine distinct Amerindian ethnic groups comprising 7 per cent of the Guyanese population. They live for the most part in separate communities in different areas of the country and speak their own languages. Those on the coast tend to interact and live together – the Arawaks, Warau and Caribs. However, the Akawaio, Patamona, Arekuna, Makushi, Wapishana and Waiwai live all over the vast interior hinterland of forests, plains, savannas, plateaux and mountains.

Let us look at a culture that appears to be less diverse than others within the Caribbean – the twin-island state of St Kitts and Nevis. The people are mainly of African

origin and their cultural practices are similar. They have had common historical experiences. If we are using the typical social construction of culture – that culture is a uniform way of life for people – then the people of St Kitts and Nevis would appear to be one people. Activity 4.2 below, however, gives an alternative view.



SUMMARY

Culture, then, is a diverse phenomenon but we have become accustomed to speaking and thinking about it in a static way. This social construction put on the concept 'culture' is at the centre of the debate about whether it is diverse in some places and uniform in others. To go beyond this way of thinking, it may be helpful to visualise how an outsider would see the culture of a place as opposed to how people in that place experience their own culture.

4.1.3

Commonalities and Differences

The truth is that there are both commonalities and differences in Caribbean culture as in others. However, we need to pause a moment and consider how we think about difference. For us to be able to speak of differences between two things there must be something that is common. It is only among things that share basic similarities that we can speak of differences and

ACTIVITY 4.2

Read the excerpt from Hubbard (2002) analysing events in the 1990s in St Kitts and Nevis with regard to the division of the country into two, and then answer the questions below.

Early attempts at a compromise failed and as a result, Premier Amory of Nevis called for a secession referendum pursuant to the constitution. Feelings ran very high in Nevis. All the slights, real or imagined, which Nevis had suffered through the years under the administration of St. Kitts were recalled in detail. For over two centuries there had been disagreements between the two, including but not limited to the payments Nevis was called upon to make in 1782 to the victorious French, the failure to rebuild the Nevis hospital after the 1899 hurricane, the Bradshaw years, and finally what Nevis called an unwarranted intrusion into its local affairs in connection with its offshore business. Additionally, it had been felt for years that St. Kitts retained development money for itself when some of it should have gone to Nevis.

(Source: Hubbard, 2002, p 159)

1. What does the passage indicate about loyalties and identities among the people of St Kitts and Nevis?
2. Compare what you think a Caribbean person from a different country would say about cultural diversity in St Kitts and Nevis with what a citizen of the country itself would say.
3. Find out what happened when the referendum was held. Why do you think the citizens of Nevis took the decision they did?

make sense. For example, the differences between two individuals, male and female, are only recognisable because they are accepted as persons. Other than that we would not be able to speak of the differences between them – it would not make sense. We would not ask for differences between the sea and a dog, or a man and a planet. We only seek out difference when the entities being compared are recognised as similar. That is the only context within which seeking difference or ‘diversity’ makes sense. Thus, when we speak of ‘cultural diversity’ in the Caribbean, we are acknowledging that there are similarities and commonalities among the cultures of the Caribbean.

◆ **All societies have different and common cultural elements. However, over time and place in one country there will certainly be changes in the ‘balance’ between differences and commonalities. Think of your country in terms of its racial or ethnic composition. To what extent did that change between 1900 and 2000?**

The balance between difference and commonalities, however, is what is problematic in this whole debate. The term ‘balance’ here does not refer so much to two things occurring equally, each offsetting the other; any equilibrium that exists is a ‘balance’. Thus, a dynamic that occurs in cultural life is the relation between its similar and different elements.

Looking at cultural diversity – different disciplines

A brief historical, sociological and anthropological reading of the Caribbean situation with regard to cultural diversity follows. Together these disciplines furnish us with a more insightful understanding of how commonalities and differences can be better understood.

History – what happened?

Caribbean society formed out of the meeting and mixing of different groups of people from societies and cultures in different parts of the world. These groups were forcibly uprooted or coerced into leaving their homelands after the aboriginal inhabitants suffered violent confrontations with the Europeans and were severely decimated. The sole purpose for importing these groups was to provide manual labour for the plantations. Europeans, Africans, Indians, Chinese and the Amerindian population all met and interacted within the context of European dominance and plantation life. It was a mixing of cultures.

Historians look at societies and cultures that existed in the past, some of which are still vibrant today. They may study these societies in a number of different ways.

1. Historians may divide events into significant time periods. Individuals tend to specialise in one time period, or two occurring consequentially, though some historians focus instead on one country, region or locality across a long time period comprising several eras.
2. The sequence of events or historical processes may be developed by examining archaeological artefacts or documents of various kinds, including reports and letters written by the colonisers, the diaries of immigrants, bills of sale or indenture between planters with regard to their workforce, estate accounts, or government legislation and correspondence, depending on the time period being studied. Geographical data such as historical maps are also seen as important pieces of evidence for the events under scrutiny.
3. A major historical concern is with trends across time, such as the fluctuations of trade or the value of a currency; the growth or decline of an empire, often compared with another in the same region; or the relative strength of sociocultural phenomena such as racism or social cohesion.
4. Historians focus on structures and processes impacting on people, generally speaking, but differ in whether they study these primarily from a political, economic or social point of view. The culture of a society is studied mainly as a way of establishing how that society was structured, although there are specialist cultural historians who look at historical cultures for their own sake.
5. Often when they study something unique, such as the Haitian revolution, historians look for what is general in the unique. They compare it with other similar events – for example, the American, French and Russian revolutions – to distil greater understanding about revolutions, or they find connections between the immediate object of study and events or processes outside or parallel to it. In other words, the unique is often used as an opportunity to better understand what is general or common. Thus, Maroon societies may be studied not primarily because of their distinctiveness compared to mainstream society but to learn more about how cultures change.

History, then, gives us one perspective on cultural diversity where differences are important in illuminating commonalities.

Sociology – what kind of society?

Sociology is the study of society. The groups who came to the Caribbean varied in their cultural orientations. There were differences in religions, languages (Box 4.2), customs and other ethnicities, leading to the existence,

BOX 4.2

Languages of the Caribbean

A mosaic of languages contributes to cultural diversity in the Caribbean. In some countries language is not a major issue; in others it is extremely contentious. In the region as a whole, though, language is seen as a divisive force militating against efforts at integration. This comes home very quickly when we realise that even when most Caribbean countries have become independent, and arbiters of their own destinies, there are very few ties between countries located close to each other geographically but where different languages are spoken. Our levels of interaction, then, are still largely determined by whether we speak the same language or not.

The macro picture is echoed in various ways within the different Caribbean countries. When one is speaking generally, it is easy to think of a Caribbean country in terms of one language, and the European language of the colonial power at that. While the European languages persist – for example, English, Dutch, French and Spanish are the official languages of various Caribbean countries – the reality is that in many cases they are rarely spoken in the European form. They are the languages for official business, for written communication and for formal situations. In a country like Barbados where English has been considered to be the main language for centuries, today Barbadian English is acknowledged as the first language. Standard English is mainly for written communication and specialised contexts.

However, the plural ethnic situation in some Caribbean countries results in an array of languages, and the **creole** may not be the first language for some people. For example, Guyana

Creole languages developed by merging the language of the enslaved and indentured populations with that of the colonisers.

has nine pre-Columbian languages (West Indian Commission, 1992), and in Belize both Kekchi and Mopan are Maya languages spoken today. In these linguistic communities the aboriginal languages will be their first or home language. The vast majority of them will become bilingual or trilingual speakers. In Guyana, they will almost certainly learn the creole as a second language. In Belize, the Kekchi and the Mopan usually learn the Belizean Creole

(Kriol) as well as Spanish, which is spoken widely. (We will look at how creole languages developed later in this chapter.)

There are still other Caribbean countries with even deeper linguistic diversity. In Suriname strong multi-ethnic traditions persist and a multiplicity of languages coexists. Many nationals only know one or two of these languages. For example, Dutch is the official language, English is widely spoken and Surinamese (the creole, known as *Sranan Tongo*) is the **lingua franca**. However, about 15 per cent of the

A **lingua franca** is the language spoken by everyone in countries or areas where more than one language is used.

population is Javanese (originally from Indonesia) and they speak a hybrid language known as Surinaams-Javaans. Hindustani (or Hindi) is also spoken, mainly by the (East) Indians. And there are also Bush Negro or Maroon communities, which include the Ndjuka, Saramacca and Matawai – and other smaller groups, such as the Kwinti, all considered ethnically different. They have their own languages, many of which differ considerably from the creole *Sranan Tongo* spoken by the majority population on the coast.

The Indians of Trinidad, Guyana and Suriname brought with them Hindi, Urdu and Bhojpuri (a variant of Hindi), and for those who are Muslims Arabic is the language of prayer. Chinese is spoken in newly immigrant families. To a large extent, though, in these countries the original languages are not widely spoken and are reserved for special occasions, such as prayer meetings. However, in Trinidad the creole tends to be liberally sprinkled with words from Hindi and Bhojpuri, particularly for foods and vegetables – *bodi* (a type of string bean), *bhaggi* (spinach), *bhaigan* (melongene), *channa* (garbanzo beans, chickpeas) and *aloo* (potato), among others.

The issue of language is one of cultural identity. The difficulties experienced in multilingual Caribbean countries stem from the unwillingness of some groups to recognise the languages of other groups as of equal status. There have been some really heated national debates about what is chosen as a national language. Minority groups feel particularly vulnerable to becoming enculturated by the dominant culture and eventually losing their language.

then and now, of distinct cultures in the Caribbean. However, they shared common experiences such as being uprooted, transported, transplanted and colonised. Colonial policies focused on the control and cultural transformation of the different groups through conquest, settlement, the plantation system and colonial laws. In this way, some kind of common or assimilatory process took place across the diverse groups, leading to a different set of relationships between the cultures as they settled down in their new home.

Sociology, while not ignoring the passage of time and the changes it brings, focuses on the relationships among the various groups making up the society at a particular juncture. One example of this is the study of *social stratification* (see §4.2).

Anthropology – what experience?

Anthropologists focus on understanding how a group develops a sense of self and identity, which involves issues of culture. They study how people in a group at a particular time and in a particular space come to learn what they stand for or represent. Thus, the experiences they share are important as well as how they are perceived by others in the society. Their behaviours and the meanings they attach to them give insights about the symbolic aspects of that culture.

For example, how a person perceives himself or herself is very much influenced by how his or her ethnic group experienced the transplanting process within the new societies of the Caribbean. Indians were brought to Trinidad, Guyana and Suriname, as well as to other territories, to set up a competitive situation with the freed Africans, who were unwilling to work on the plantations for a menial wage. The Africans had other options. As new immigrants, the Indians, with customs, religions and languages very different from those of the African and European populations, were relegated to the bottom of the social hierarchy. Within this diverse milieu of different ethnic groups, occupying different social strata, the anthropologist is interested in how the self is built and how the group sees itself with respect to others.

In the example we have been considering, Indians had their own cultural resources, more or less intact, to help them deal with the hardship and oppression they experienced. In a foreign land amidst strange people who were long established, they clung to their customs and remained in the rural areas even after their period of indentureship. Being social outcasts they formed a virtually closed community. However, their children, born in the Caribbean, sought education and soon after that competition for the rewards of the society. They

used any means – education, land, business and family contacts – to better their social and economic position.

History, sociology and anthropology, then, give us some insights into how the study of cultural diversity is approached by different disciplines. History studies differences in order to understand commonalities better. Sociology indicates that the same cultural processes occur in all societies and that differences arise because of how groups relate to each other. Finally, anthropologists focus on the common experiences of people that shape their concept of ‘self’ and influence them to choose different options.

A shared space

Occupying the same space meant that accommodation had to be made between the different ethnic groups. For example:

- In similar places where different groups had been brought in as labour (for example, Mauritius and Sri Lanka) *cultural pluralism* was the form of accommodation that resulted (see below and Box 4.3).
- Particularly in the Caribbean more than other places, from the very first contact of Europeans and the First Peoples, hybridisation (discussed below, §4.3) or miscegenation became a form of accommodation.
- Another option also exercised from the beginnings of the Conquest was maroonage – running away and attempting to build a different society and culture.

Cultural pluralism is a term associated with the cultural diversity resulting from European colonisation, when different groups were brought either forcibly, or under contract, as labour for plantations. It describes culture and society not only in the Caribbean but also in Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Fiji and other ex-colonies. In a plural society there are two or more ethnic groups who share the same space but do not mix to a significant extent. They may meet and mingle at school, at the workplace and in different groups and associations, but to a large extent they live in different areas, work in different occupations (one may be largely rural-based), celebrate different festivals and do not intermarry.

- In Fiji, the British brought in labourers from India to work on the plantations. Today their descendants and the native Fijians constitute a plural society made up of separate communities between which there is much hate and mistrust.
- In Sri Lanka (Ceylon) the British also brought in workers from India as labour for the tea plantations in the island. In recent years the native population

(Sinhalese) and the Indians (Tamils) have been engaged in a long civil strife and open violence, which ended with accusations of genocide perpetrated by the Sinhalese authorities against the defeated Tamil minority.

- In the Caribbean, societies that seem to be somewhat similar are Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. In Guyana, relations are polarised between those of African and Indian descent and there have been incidents of ethnic violence in the past. Trinidad and Tobago teeters on the brink of this from time to time. Suriname, however, presents a special case (see Box 4.3).

ACTIVITY 4.3

Choose ONE ethnic group in Caribbean society and culture and find out more about its history. Write an essay showing how its members' sense of cultural identity has been influenced by the experiences they have had.

All these accommodations reflect the perceptions and understandings of the self in relation to their experiences. All groups used their cultural resources to help them adapt in the Caribbean environment. In the options they exercised about Caribbean space, and thus their relationships with other groups, they were forging an identity (Box 4.4, page 88). When speaking of cultural diversity, then, we should be mindful of what lies behind the different customs, values and traditions. And what lies behind all these diverse outcomes is remarkably similar. It lies in the experiences a people have had which have shaped their perceptions of themselves and others in the space they occupy. It lies in the cultural resources they have used and adapted to survive.

The 'them' and 'us' syndrome

Cultural diversity is a term that emphasises the differences among people. It is both a call to 'celebrate' and recognise difference and at the same time to be aware that cultural difference is a potentially explosive reality (Box 4.5, page 89). We have surveyed different ethnicities in this section, and tried to move beyond seeing difference as 'just difference'. Here we want to go a bit further to interrogate ourselves to reveal the social constructions that we have inherited which can lead people from different ethnic groups to keep a distance from each other. Thus, the problems we associate with cultural diversity do not necessarily arise out of people being so

BOX 4.3

Cultural pluralism in Suriname

The two major ethnic groups in Suriname are the Indians (36 per cent), whose ancestors were brought by the Dutch as contract labour, and the Creoles (descendants of Africans and Europeans), comprising 31 per cent. However, there are substantial minorities such as the Javanese from Indonesia (15 per cent, also brought by the Dutch on contract) and the Maroons (10 per cent). The rest of the population is made up of Amerindians, Chinese and others. The Indian, Javanese and Chinese elements together make Suriname a predominantly 'Asian' country. Alliances of the major ethnic groups functioned well in Suriname (once independence had been achieved) in an elaborate system of checks and balances, though there were instances of ethnic tensions. The military takeover in 1980 disrupted this delicate peace by removing the checks and balances that had been established between all the major ethnic groups. The Maroons or Bush Negroes were increasingly discriminated against. Economically difficult times intensified conflicts with the Maroons, who held a relatively autonomous position in the interior, claiming large areas as their homelands given to them by treaty with the Dutch in the eighteenth century. Of significance, too, is the strong feeling by other Surinamers that the Maroons were a 'backward' people.

The dictatorship was supported mainly by Creoles. What followed was akin to genocide: the military were dispatched to forcibly remove the Maroons from their homeland and relocate them. A bloody civil war and untold atrocities ensued. What is remarkable is that this was a war waged on Africans by Africans. It tells us that the possibility of ethnic conflict is an ever-present reality in plural societies. Yet some countries have been able to avoid it entirely, as did Suriname itself until power was grasped by a group unconcerned with achieving a 'balance' of representation by the different groups.

unlike, but from the fact that we have been socialised to behave in a 'them versus us' way. One argument that encourages the 'them versus us' condition is that 'no one can really understand a culture if he or she does not

BOX 4.4**Ethnic identity**

We saw earlier the fragile nature of plural societies, where different ethnic groups live in a tenuous peace that sometimes deteriorates into civil war, as in Sri Lanka and Suriname. These societies are an outcome of colonisation and the plantation system. The groups brought to the Caribbean at different times had to work out accommodations and rules for living together. What loomed large in these accommodations was maintaining ethnic pride.

The plantation was the most important, if not the only, economic unit under colonisation. It was also a social unit, each plantation being a mini-society in itself. There was not much communication between plantations for non-Europeans, whose lives were severely restricted. Europeans brought in enslaved labour from Africa to work on the sugar plantations, and after Emancipation, Indian, Chinese, Portuguese and Javanese were also brought in where a labour shortage was experienced. The groups were naturally distrustful of one another, each having its own cultural norms and customs. It was an artificial situation constructed by Europeans who maintained a highly stratified system of social relations that effectively separated the groups. While the British were in control of a colony they thought it in their own best interests to keep the races divided. Unity would have threatened the position of the few whites who were in charge.

Indians and Africans began their relationship in mutual antipathy. While some Africans were willing to work on the plantations for wages, the influx of Indians drove down the price of labour. They therefore resented the newcomers, who were looked on as social outcasts and remained locked into an isolated existence on the plantations. In this artificial situation to which they were brought, where they met other groups but were not expected to mix, and where they were of low social status, each group tried as best as it could to forge an ethnic identity of which it could be proud.

In Guyana and Trinidad each group sought to lay claim to their new society. Africans claimed a superior education, a sophisticated urban existence and long residence in the colony; Indians claimed that their propensity for hard work, thrift and business acumen helped to develop the country. These self-characterisations spoke to the need to find a place in a situation that was not of their making but in which they had to live. Thus, these ethnically based conceptions of themselves were accommodations that Africans and Indians employed to show that they belonged. They had to do this because no one really 'belonged'. The issue of 'belongingness' always looms large in plural societies where different ethnic groups have been imported over time.

belong to it'. This statement is suggesting that you need to become an insider to totally understand someone's way of life. If this is so, then different ethnic groups in a country are fated to remain suspicious and distrustful of each other. Activity 4.4 explores this theme.

ACTIVITY 4.4

1. To what extent do you agree that you cannot understand others if you do not belong to their ethnic group?
2. Explain how socialisation encourages the 'them versus us' syndrome.
3. Do you believe that people can transcend their socialisation?
4. For all the points given in Box 4.5 suggest concrete Caribbean examples.

**SUMMARY**

The term 'cultural diversity' emphasises the idea of difference, invites a celebration of difference and at the same time is wary of the problems that may result. However, it conceals something about the true nature of culture, as culture is in itself a diverse entity. People do not just bear their culture but interpret and choose their actions and behaviours. It also conceals something about diversity or difference – that for something to be different there must be some things that are common. History, sociology and anthropology show us that underlying the obvious ethnic differences are some very strong similarities between those groups. However, the idea of difference is so strongly emphasised, and indeed there are so many ethnicities in the Caribbean to reinforce this idea, that the common human experience of all Caribbean people tends to be overlooked and discounted as a source of Caribbean identity and solidarity.

BOX 4.5**Positive and negative effects of cultural diversity**

Studying the relations between different ethnic groups in culturally diverse societies, especially plural societies created as a result of colonisation, reveals that many of them have erupted into ethnic violence from time to time. They are generally felt to be 'fragile' societies because of the seeming impossibility of getting different groups to appreciate each other's point of view. However, some plural societies have managed to avoid outright ethnic violence, and some have had periods where the groups, solidified by political alliances, have worked peaceably together. Nevertheless, they live all the time with the understanding that deep-seated ethnic prejudices can be stirred up (usually in times of economic downturn) and threaten social stability. While discussions about ethnic relations in culturally diverse and plural societies tend to take on a negative tone, people who live in such societies do still speak of a more positive side.

Positive effects of cultural diversity

- Members enjoy a variety of foods, festivals, music and celebrations, as well as fashions, handicrafts and other cultural expressions such as dance. Even though some persons do not participate in another group's ethnic celebrations, the fact is that they occur, presenting citizens with a variety of alternatives and experiences.
- Day-to-day living in such societies provides instances enabling one to reflect on the values and customs of others: for example, the furore created when a Roman Catholic school in Trinidad refused to enrol a student wearing a hijab, and at a later date a Rastafarian student because of the dreadlocks hairstyle. These situations present opportunities for national dialogue, which may or may not occur as civilised discourse – they are opportunities nevertheless.
- One can learn to appreciate other cultures and an array of perspectives by just growing up in the society: for example, by having close friends in other groups and being invited to religious celebrations and festivals, or by just observing family life in another culture.
- Diverse and plural societies provide unique conditions under which experiments in cultural hybridisation may take place to create wholly different forms of music, art, literature and poetry which speak to the experience of more than one ethnic group.
- As members of associations and unions of all kinds in these societies, including the government, persons learn from an early age that conflict is endemic and that they need skills of negotiation, alliance-building and brokering peace to accommodate all the many perspectives that arise. They recognise the importance of maintaining 'balance' between the ethnicities, which is the essence of democracy – letting all voices be heard.
- Persons of mixed race, themselves a product of cultural diversity, who do not feel such strong affiliation to any specific ethnic group, provide interesting alternatives in behaviour which may act as mirrors for some members of the wider society to reflect on and evaluate their own views and reactions.

Negative effects of cultural diversity

- Ethnic prejudices are perpetuated through socialisation within the family, which is reinforced in interaction with friends and acquaintances; differences appear to be so profound that myths and misconceptions of the other race or ethnic groups are believed as fact.
- Ethnic hate may arise out of feelings of ethnic superiority (the 'them versus us' syndrome), compounded by perceptions that another group is getting more of the national pie than one's own group.
- Ethnic politics develops, with political parties becoming polarised according to race. In such situations politics becomes a contest between ethnicities. The ethnic lines harden and jobs, promotions, opportunities and gifts are limited to people of the same ethnicity as that of the ruling party. This sort of discrimination exacerbates a situation that is already potentially unstable.
- Continued feelings of discrimination, the sense of being exploited and fears that one's lifestyle and means of earning a living may be in jeopardy, lead to social unrest – spontaneous demonstrations, labour riots and outbreaks of ethnic violence.
- Inability on the part of the ruling group or any other power to intervene and restore order may lead to civil war and genocide.

4.2

Social stratification

Another characteristic feature of Caribbean societies, indeed of almost all societies, is **social stratification**.

Social stratification refers to a system operating in a particular society which ranks the population into social classes or groups arranged in a hierarchy.

4.2.1 Closed Systems

The ranking involved in social stratification indicates that some groups have more and some have less of what the society values – for example, money, power and/or prestige. Thus, they are unequal. Wealthy groups occupy the highest position in the social hierarchy. The different levels of the hierarchy are called ‘social strata’ (singular ‘stratum’). A ‘status’ is a rank or position in the social hierarchy. The lowest strata, generally occupied by the poorest groups, have low status. A *closed system* of social stratification indicates that the groups in society are unequal and the pattern of inequality that forms persists from one generation to the next. A good example is the caste system (Box 4.6), brought to the Caribbean by Indian indentured labourers and still a feature of some societies today.

Research mini-project

Investigate the extent to which the caste system functions among the descendants of Indian indentured labourers in the Caribbean today. Suggest reasons why certain rituals or practices are no longer evident and why others persist.

Sociologists have shown that social stratification has occurred in all Caribbean societies – in Carib and Arawak society, in plantation society and in ‘free’ society. There was always a ranking of social groups, though the criteria differed. In aboriginal societies high status arose from fighting prowess or descent; in plantation society it depended on race/colour; and in societies of the post-Emancipation era social status turned on a combination of race, colour, class, wealth and/or education.

In closed systems of social stratification, the hierarchy was based on **ascribed criteria**. In Caribbean society

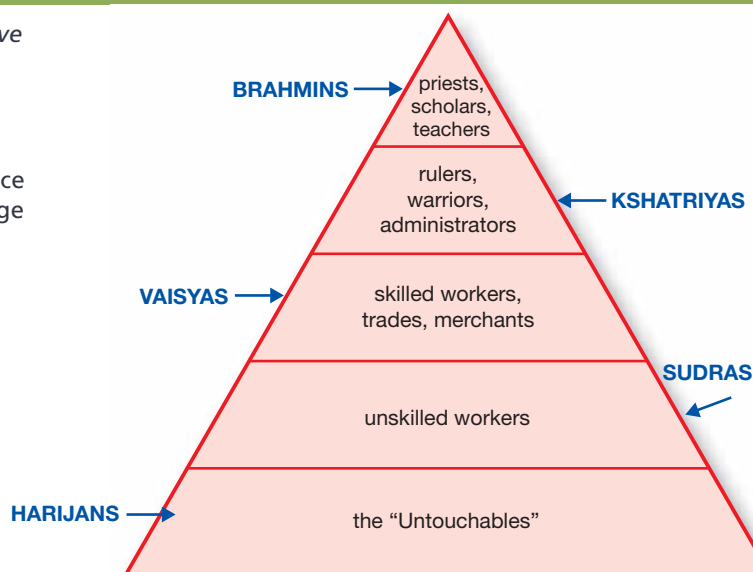
Ascribed criteria are those categories that you were born into and cannot change, such as your race and colour or the caste to which your family belongs.

during the era of slavery (see Box 4.7), the criteria determining a person’s position in the social hierarchy were race and colour. Thus, the system was effectively

BOX 4.6 The caste system

The caste system was based on *ascriptive status*, which depends on birth rather than achievement. A person born into a caste (a position in society based on family lineage) was expected to marry another member of that caste (a practice referred to as *endogamy*). Family lineage defined one’s status in terms of *ethnic purity*, which involved keeping oneself separate from those of other castes. Family lineage was also associated with inheritance of wealth, power and prestige. The caste system was seen as permanent and it was reinforced by elaborate practices and procedures to keep the castes separate.

Fig. 4.1 The caste system



BOX 4.7

Social stratification under slavery

Plantation society in the Caribbean during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was a closed system of stratification based on the ascribed criteria of race and colour. The **plantocracy** was at the head of it, and the **chattel slaves** at the bottom. Fig. 4.2 represents its social structure, showing the occupations and the relative positions of each group. It was a rigid and inflexible system based on institutionalised racism.

Plantocracy refers to the influence wielded by planters in the society as effectively the ruling class.

Chattel slaves were enslaved persons seen as owned entirely by their slave masters. They had no rights.

As you can see in the diagram, race and colour were tied to occupation in the society. Black or coloured persons could be either slaves or free people of colour, though the latter was a relatively small group. Thus it was evident just by looking at someone what his or her station in life was. White persons were never of low social status, though white indentured labourers from time to time strained these social boundaries. A person's perceived racial characteristics said clearly what his or her social position was. This was an oppressive social system that no one could escape without

some kind of bargaining power. Persons of mixed ancestry and light-coloured skin were the most fortunate in this regard; by virtue of their appearance they were rewarded with lighter work as domestic slaves. Many were also freed by their white fathers and even educated, so that their prospects were considerably better than others who were neither free nor of mixed race. The 'coloureds' worked as an efficient buffer group between the whites and the blacks as they shared European values and would hardly risk losing their 'privileged' status by uniting with blacks to overthrow the oppressor.

However, on much closer inspection the three levels were also subdivided. Among the whites, those who were European by birth were usually of higher social standing but they were often an 'absentee' class, so the creole whites were effectively at the top of the social hierarchy. The poorer whites (the tradesmen, overseers, bookkeepers) were somewhat removed but still ranked above the free coloureds, by virtue of race. Among the free coloureds there was a complicated ranking based on the degree of whiteness (octaroon, quadroon), the degree of education, wealth and the extent to which one had the protection of a white relative. And among the enslaved Africans there was the distinction between 'house' and 'field' slaves.

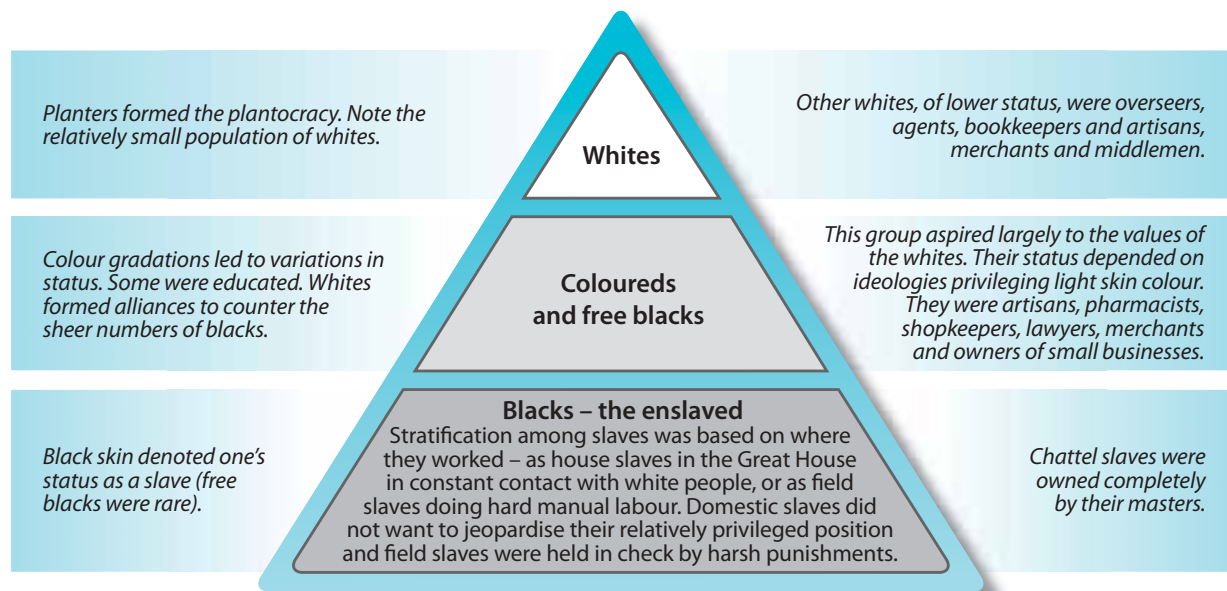


Fig. 4.2 Social stratification under slavery

closed to those below who were trying to move up because their race and colour proclaimed their low status. Similarly, in India, where the caste system was also closed, persons were expected to interact and intermarry within their caste, keeping the social strata distinct. Castes are relatively strong and stable categories which have existed for centuries and they effectively separate groups who follow different traditions of ritual purity, who engage in certain related occupations and who have different ethnicities and lineage. (However, in India today these rigid caste prescriptions have been breaking down for some time.) Closed systems of social stratification are based on ascribed criteria that allocate persons to the different social strata.

4.2.2 Social Inequality

A stratified system or ranking of social groups is clearly a form of institutionalised inequality. That means that persons have less or more access to the rewards of the society (for example, wealth, status and prestige) according to their social standing. Thus, even with qualifications a poor person may lose a job he or she seeks to a wealthy applicant, who may not have such good qualifications, simply because the latter has powerful family connections. In the Caribbean, as already noted, persons of lighter skin colour or of white or mixed race have traditionally been held in higher regard. These traits had the stamp of social approval. It often happened that such persons obtained better jobs and had better marriage prospects and opportunities than others in the society who were ranked lower on those traits.

◆ **Suggest at least THREE ways that the more influential groups in your society attempt to restrict members lower down the social hierarchy from moving upwards.**

These are examples of how the system of social stratification in a country maintains the inequalities between the groups. Although some of the examples described above are illegal and officially regarded as forms of discrimination today, there are often ways to get around such charges so that inequalities are actually maintained. These inequalities, then, are ‘institutionalised’ – they are actually part of how the society is organised and how it functions. As a result, groups with more money, status and power tend to obstruct other groups from moving upwards in the society. They act as gatekeepers, preventing the progress of other groups.

In Caribbean life today, education is seen as the primary means of accessing social mobility throughout

the region. Previously disadvantaged groups, such as those of African, Indian and Amerindian descent, can now attain greater wealth and prestige than their parents and move to a higher socioeconomic class position by virtue of being educated. This changes the traditional stratified picture and increases diversity in social relations. For example, in some countries (e.g. Barbados, Jamaica) the descendants of Europeans continue to own wealth and occupy the highest rungs of the social hierarchy. Increasingly, though, they have to share their position with other ethnic groups achieving professional status. In other Caribbean countries (e.g. Dominica and St Vincent) the old white elite is virtually non-existent and Africans make up the majority in all socioeconomic levels. We will look at social mobility in more detail later in this chapter (§4.2.4).

4.2.3 Social Class and Social Stratification

Today in the Caribbean *social class* is used to distinguish the different levels or strata of society based on those who have the same social and economic resources and therefore the same social status. The ‘class structure’, as it is sometimes called, refers to how modern societies are stratified into the upper, middle and lower social classes. Contrary to the social structure in plantation society or under the Indian caste system, social class in modern societies is based on **achieved criteria**. Any system of

Achieved criteria refers to a person’s performance in being able to earn what the society values – wealth, status and prestige.

social stratification, though, is based on inequalities. Thus, within the population there are unequal chances of achieving these rewards.

Social class is a concept that was used by **Karl Marx** (§14.3.2) in his analysis of the inequalities in modern capitalist society. He saw society as having two main social classes – the *bourgeoisie*, who were the capitalists and owned the means of production, and the *proletariat* or worker class, who sold their labour to the bourgeoisie. In between, there was a smaller group known as the *petite bourgeoisie*, who were mainly farmers and small business owners. The capitalists and workers were in ceaseless conflict because their goals were mutually incompatible. The capitalist or bourgeois class focused on making as much profit as possible at the expense of exploiting the workers. Marx claimed that the wages being paid to the proletariat were minimal compared to the profit that their labour made possible. Consequently, the workers were bent on forcing the bourgeoisie to pay a more realistic wage.

Max Weber challenged Marx's portrayal to show that social class was also based on power (those having the resources to impose their will on others) and prestige or status (those having something that was held in high esteem in the society). For example, a poor lawyer could move in high social circles because of his or her status as a lawyer, a respected profession. Similarly, a politician may be from the poorer classes but by virtue of the power inherent in such a position he or she will have access to the highest social classes. Additionally, Weber argued that the growth of a capitalist economy enabled a third class, the middle class, to evolve and become differentiated into several layers (e.g. upper middle class, lower middle class), which are not necessarily locked in ceaseless conflict with workers. For example, the **intelligentsia** may not own much

The **intelligentsia** are those who have had the benefit of higher education, the intellectual elite who comprise the managerial and professional class.

property, but certainly do not match Marx's concept of the proletariat. Then there are 'white-collar' workers who work in all types of businesses, industry and the service sector generally, including 'dot com' companies.

Marx saw the working class as consisting of mainly unskilled, manual labour earning a low wage with minimal levels of education and training. This lower social class category is widely known as the *working class* today but it is much more complex than Marx's original concept. At various levels within this social class there are 'blue-collar' workers, skilled workers, semi-skilled, unskilled and self-employed non-professionals. One may even find an extremely skilled tradesman earning much more than a white-collar worker who enjoys higher status. The *underclass* is defined as those who belong to the lowest social stratum, and although some may be employed, for the most part they live below the poverty level.

ACTIVITY 4.5

1. Suggest what may be the differences between a white-collar worker and a blue-collar worker.
2. Draw an expanded diagram to represent social class divisions in a typical Caribbean country, based on Fig. 4.3.
 - a. On the diagram label the position in terms of social class of each of the following: an economist, a teacher, a bank teller, a plumber, a business tycoon, a trade union leader, a drug lord and a successful novelist.
 - b. Identify any issues that cropped up in making your decisions about where to place an occupational category or any adjustments you found it necessary to make to the diagram.

It is important to note that while society in the Caribbean today is stratified according to social class, that situation has evolved gradually from plantation society, where status was ascribed and based on race and colour. Indeed, there are still many similarities in the structure of the society that echo the past. A comparison of Figs 4.2 and 4.3 should reveal some of these. However, there have also been changes. The next section tries to account for the continuance of inequalities based on race and colour and discusses how a ranking of social groups based on achievement criteria has changed the structure of the society.

4.2.4. Social Mobility

The movement of individuals and groups from one social class to another, either up or down the social hierarchy, is called *social mobility*. In closed systems of social stratification, mobility was not possible, or was extremely limited. In modern-day Caribbean society, where membership in a social class is 'open' and depends on what one has achieved in the way of wealth, status or prestige, upward social mobility is prized and equated with perceptions of success. This is characteristic of a **meritocracy**.

A **meritocracy** is a society where one can advance socially based on what one has achieved.

The main ways of achieving upward social mobility are:

- by marrying someone with money;
- by acquiring enough educational credentials to secure a well-paying job;
- by owning a successful business and investing wisely.

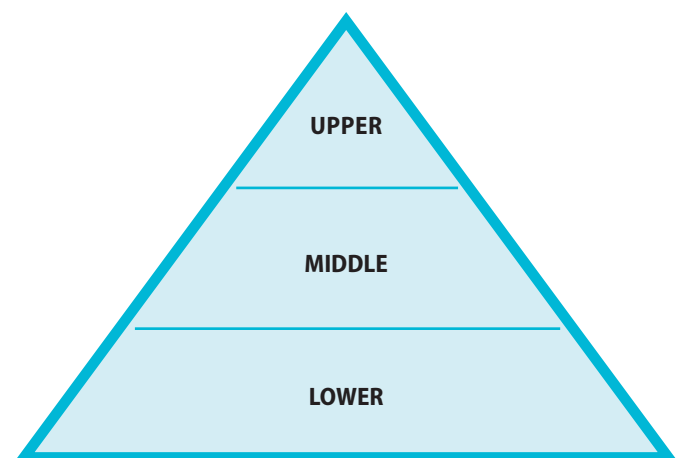


Fig. 4.3 Social class divisions in a typical Caribbean country

Persons already in the higher social classes have usually either inherited family wealth or married into families that have. They are the owners and managers of business and industry. In many cases social mobility is intergenerational; that is, a family may move to a higher socioeconomic bracket because of the hard work, diligence and foresight of the older generation. The elders in a family may have been poor but by being thrifty, perhaps opening a small business and making wise investments, such as buying land, they were able to educate their children to tertiary levels, positioning them to access social mobility.

The most popular route to social mobility for the majority of people today lies in education. In modern societies education has been made more accessible to everyone in all income groups. For many, especially those of the lower social classes, education is the only route to social mobility. Education has been responsible for entirely new class formations – for example, the intelligentsia and the workforce involved in the new occupations proliferating in business, technology and microelectronics. There has been a tremendous expansion in occupational types and subtypes, resulting in many different kinds of white-collar and blue-collar jobs. Education and training up to secondary and post-secondary levels opens up access to these opportunities and represents a path to upward social mobility for those in the lower income groups. Such a movement, though, is usually only from one level to another (for example, manual labour to skilled labour within the working class, or from lower middle class to higher levels within the middle class).

ACTIVITY 4.6

1. Several ways of accessing social mobility have been described here. Discuss the point of view that it is difficult for persons in the lower income groups to access any of them.
2. Choose THREE persons from among your circle of family and acquaintances who are employed. Compare their occupations with those of their parents. Where social mobility has occurred, identify the factors you believe were important. Similarly, where it has not occurred, try to account for the factors that may be responsible. (Note that since we are dealing with individuals a host of personal factors may apply: for example, individual drive and determination, and gender-based factors such as women having to give up jobs to look after children, and so on.)

Money, wealth or income remain the main criteria that stratify the society into different social groups, and thus to

a large extent social class depends on occupation. Social mobility is possible and many have accessed it, especially through education, but it happens within a stratified society based on social class. Thus, there are inequalities and for some people they are entrenched inequalities.

While the structure of Caribbean societies today shows that many descendants of Africans and Indians are in the higher social classes, it also reveals that large numbers of these same groups have not been successful in accessing social mobility. They still comprise the poorest groups in the society, and are at the bottom of the social hierarchy. The wealthier and more powerful groups (white, near-white and coloureds) continue to be found almost exclusively in the higher social classes. They do not seem to have experienced any significant downward social mobility over time. Thus, although the society is said to be a meritocracy, structured on achieved criteria, there are large numbers of people who cannot access (and, some believe, are prevented from accessing) the means to become socially mobile.

An interesting case is presented by the Portuguese, Chinese and Syrian-Lebanese communities in different Caribbean countries. Not very long ago they were at the bottom of the social hierarchy as newly arrived poor immigrants, but today many are in the highest social classes.

 **Suggest reasons why, in perhaps two generations, these groups have become upwardly mobile to such an extent, while groups that have been here for centuries have not been able to do the same.**



SUMMARY

Social stratification is a system of inequality that may be based on ascribed or achieved criteria. While Marx painted a simple picture of capitalists and workers forming the main social classes in capitalist society, Weber showed that money, and sometimes power and prestige, were important in explaining one's social class location. Thus, income or wealth were not the only criteria in determining social class. Additionally, Weber showed that as capitalism grew, each social class (upper, middle and lower) developed its own subdivisions. Thus, the system of social stratification in modern capitalist economies based on social class is an extremely complex way of institutionalising inequalities.

Contrary to plantation society and the Indian caste system, social class in modern-day capitalist societies is based on achieved criteria. Individuals relocate in the social hierarchy

based on what they or their family have achieved (known as a meritocracy). Social mobility is a characteristic of the social stratification of such modern-day capitalist societies. Persons are able to access membership in higher social classes largely through their efforts in education and the chance to secure better-paying jobs or occupations. Certain social groups have been able to access social mobility to a greater extent than other groups. However, social class is a system of stratification and it is not easy to move upwards in the social hierarchy, even with advanced educational credentials. Thus, while there have been changes to the social structure, there are still many similarities to the social stratification experienced in plantation society.

4.3

Hybridisation and creolisation

4.3.1 Some Definitions

Meeting and mixing in the Caribbean region have been going on for more than five hundred years. Prior to the Conquest the aboriginal inhabitants of the New World migrated through the Caribbean from South America. They captured each other and adopted each other's language and adapted cultural practices. This is described as **hybridisation**. Thus, when Columbus arrived there

Hybridisation refers to processes of cultural and ethnic mixing to produce new or 'creole' forms. It is borrowed from biology where it refers to one species being cross-fertilised with another to produce a new species.

is no telling how 'hybrid' the cultures of the people he met already were. The term is used in Caribbean life to describe many levels of meeting and mixing and creating something new, especially fusion between different races to produce hybrid peoples and cultures. The idea of **creolisation** is related to this (see Box 4.8, page 96, for the meaning of the term 'creole').

Creolisation refers to any kind of fusion of people, ideas, customs, culture and beliefs to create a different form or likeness which may or may not be very similar to the original.

One of the major exponents of creolisation is Edward Kamau Brathwaite. According to Brathwaite, Caribbean society 'began' on the slave ships and the plantations through the processes of *seasoning* into life in the New World. This creolisation thesis recognises the multiple

and unending variations between and among Caribbean peoples and their cultures and subcultures and emphasises the creativity that comes out of the clash between cultures, with some groups being in a dominant or hegemonic position. It rejects western views of **acculturation** and introduces us to the complexity of cultural mixing in the Caribbean.

Acculturation means socialisation into another, more dominant culture, whether it be the culture of a colonial power, or that of a migrant's host country.

4.3.2 Racial and Ethnic Hybridisation

Amerindian and African women, and to a lesser extent those of Indian descent, were forced to cohabit with and have children by the European conquistadors, slave masters and overseers. This miscegenation went on for centuries so that a mixed or coloured 'race' of people grew up. Many of the children of such unions had physical features proclaiming their 'white' inheritance and sometimes, if they too cohabited with white men, their offspring looked virtually 'white'. By inference, according to the racial ideologies then prevailing, these lighter-skinned children were somehow 'better' than their maternal ancestors, they were dealt with more leniently and some were educated, all because they had biological/physical traits publicising their European connection. A *pigmentocracy* evolved, in which persons of fairer complexions enjoyed more prestige and wielded more power in the society than others. Thus, skin colour, and to a lesser extent hair texture and facial features, loom large in any discussions of society and culture and identity in the Caribbean. It is a social construct tacked on to biological characteristics.

It is not difficult to understand the role that skin colour played (and still plays) in the development of society and culture in the Caribbean. From the very beginning of the Conquest, the Spaniards regarded the aboriginal inhabitants as subhuman. This notion of racial superiority was extended to encompass the enslaved and, later, indentured populations who were of a different race. Although Europeans also came to the Caribbean as indentured labourers at different times, they were never regarded as subhuman. That category was reserved for non-whites. Racial and ethnic hybridisation, then, underscored and emphasised the prevailing ideologies in the society, equating skin colour with social constructions of superiority/inferiority.

However, there was much variety in this coloured group. A continuum of colour and shade came to characterise Caribbean people, with each colour and shade coming to have social meanings. Those at the 'almost white' end

BOX 4.8

The meanings of 'creole'

Jolivet (2003), in the following passage, discusses the derivation and meaning of the term 'creole'.

It comes from 'criollo' which in the sixteenth century was used by the Spanish to designate their children born in the West Indies. That was always the definition of the word 'criole' in the Furetière dictionary, dated 1690. For the French who quickly transformed it into 'Créole', the term became synonymous with any white person born in the colonies. However, a distinction began to appear between the definition used in Europe (and in the dictionaries) and local practice. From the end of the seventeenth century, in fact, in his New Voyage to the Islands of America, Father Labat ... spoke of creole slaves as opposed to traded slaves. In a more general sense, the term describes the local 'descendant' of anything imported: one speaks of 'creole corn' or 'creole livestock'. Applied to people, it describes a person born locally of immigrant parents and, thus, also distinguishes native peoples from newcomers. (p 214)

Later in the chapter, in speaking of the situation in French Guiana (or Guyane, sometimes referred to as Cayenne), Jolivet mentions that the people who regard themselves as Creoles do so in order to maintain distinctions between themselves and the Amerindians, new immigrants and the Bush Negroes, who are also African. One distinction they prize is the adoption of a European way of life, with its connotations of urban lifestyles.

However, in Trinidad and Tobago the term 'creole' is used to describe persons of African

descent. Paradoxically (and more aligned to Jolivet's explanation in the passage above), the term 'French Creole' refers to the descendants of French settlers who came to Trinidad in the late eighteenth century. But there is a world of difference in calling someone a 'French Creole' and a 'creole'. The former are descendants of white colonials and still carry names such as de Verteuil, de la Bastide, Farfan and de Montbrun. They were major landowners and today have considerable business and industrial interests. It would be incomprehensible in Trinidad and Tobago's culture and society to describe a person of Indian or Chinese descent as 'creole', though elsewhere in the Caribbean that will be entirely acceptable in the general use of the term according to Jolivet.

Labelling the hybrid languages of the Caribbean as 'the creole' follows the traditional meaning of the term as 'something born or created in the Caribbean'. There is also widespread use of the term in the Caribbean and the southern United States to describe specific culinary arts as 'creole cooking'. Today the term is also used to refer to the environment – the 'creole environment' or 'creole space' – an acknowledgement by scholars of the themes of hybridity, creativity, resistance and resilience, which have characterised much of the interaction between groups in the Caribbean.

The convention used here about capitalising the first letter of 'creole' is fairly standard. If reference is to a specific place or group of things, capitals are used, as in the 'Haitian Creole' or 'Caribbean Creole' cooking. For general reference, lower case 'c' is used, as in 'creoles', or 'the creole spoken in the Caribbean'.

of the continuum looked forward to better prospects and life changes than those at the 'darker' end because 'high' colour was often rewarded with more lucrative employment and entry into exclusive social circles. This respect accorded to colour pervaded the society. It was not only a matter of preference for European-type features but also that alliances with whites or lightly coloured persons were a means of social betterment. Thus, a black man who was educated and had good prospects would look for a light-skinned wife, even one of lower socioeconomic status, as their children would move in higher social circles than he had when growing up. The lighter-skinned wife would be something akin to a status symbol. Such a woman would be optimistic that this marriage would move her into a higher social bracket where her light skin would be an asset.

Today, skin colour continues to weave its fascination among Caribbean people. However, preference for lighter-skinned persons – be it as spouses, friends or employees – is very much underground. Fewer persons today own up to these prejudices publicly because the populace at large now has a more balanced understanding of how the value placed on skin colour has been socially constructed.

◆ **To what extent do you agree that skin colour is no longer an important factor in Caribbean society and culture in determining life changes – for example, courting and marriage, or employment? Is it an important factor in establishing friendships or in everyday activities?**

Although persons of mixed race form an ethnic group, they are so diverse in their characteristics that we cannot quite pinpoint their sense of cultural ‘belongingness’. Some countries have more ‘coloureds’ than others (e.g. Trinidad, St Lucia, the French Caribbean). Some countries may only have two majority races (black and white) producing their coloured populations (e.g. Jamaica, Barbados, Antigua). Others have more players (African, European, Indian, Amerindian and Chinese) so that the varieties and combinations are innumerable. They are found at all socioeconomic levels of the society, but perhaps because of the deliberate effects of privileging light colour by allotting better jobs to coloured persons and marrying ‘upward’, the higher socioeconomic groups tend to have larger numbers of coloured persons today.

At the same time, though, skin colour is not the only characteristic of the mixed race groups that contributes to cultural diversity. The actual physical characteristics of such persons provide a spectrum of blends of other characteristics as well, such as height, hair texture, body type, eye colour and facial features. And in different Caribbean countries the same groups may occupy different social and cultural positions. Here we want to look in somewhat more detail at the different hybrid groups produced by the meeting and mixing of people.

Although various terms have been coined for the offspring of some of these unions, there are not enough terms to match all the varieties and combinations that have occurred. Europeans first encountered the Amerindians in the fifteenth century, and in that violent impact between the powerful and the powerless the mixed race of *mestizos* was born. Among Hispanic scholars in the Caribbean the term ‘mestizo’ has been used to label all people of mixed race in the Caribbean – Euro-Amerindian mestizo, Afro-Amerindian mestizo, Afro-European mestizo, and so on. In the terminology of British historians, miscegenation between enslaved Africans and their white European overlords produced the ethnic group known as *mulattos*. The preoccupation with lighter skin colour as a mark of superiority has led to some fine distinctions being calculated about someone’s ancestry. A mulatto was half black and half white. A child of a mulatto and a black person was called a *sambo*; a child of a mulatto and white person a *quadroon*; and a child of a quadroon and a white person an *octaroon*. Continued unions of Africans, coloureds and whites over several hundred years produced the continuum of colour apparent among coloured and African ethnic groups today in the Caribbean. Contributing to the diversity is the geography of this distribution. Some countries, such

as Cuba and Puerto Rico, have large creole and mulatto populations, while the Dominican Republic population is mainly mulatto, and that of Haiti black.

Other unions were also taking place: for example, between Africans (especially those who ran away from the plantations) and Amerindians, forming the Afro-Amerindian mestizo category.

- The Misquito Indians of the Nicaraguan coast are an ethnic group comprising persons of mixed heritage. Their African ancestors were completely assimilated, fully adopting the language and customs of the Amerindians.
- The Garifunas of Belize, on the other hand, are descendants of Black Carib rebels (see Chapter 2) deported from St Vincent by the British in 1797 and relocated on the coast of Honduras, where miscegenation occurred with the local Africans and Amerindians. Their mainly Arawakan language persists, as well as their kinship networks and religious beliefs. This hybridised culture of Africans and Caribs from St Vincent is considered among anthropologists to be a remarkable example of **cultural retention**.

Cultural retention refers to practices that have survived even when most other forms and symbols of a culture are no longer evident.

In Trinidad and Guyana the phenomenon of *douglarisation* (Box 4.9) shows, in contrast, how mixed race groups can be stigmatised because of their ancestry.

We have seen how the polyglot peoples of the Caribbean showcase the rich racial and ethnic diversity of the region resulting from hybridisation. However, a full account of hybridisation, especially as it relates to cultural diversity, must take a deeper look at how cultures meet and mingle, and how cultural erasure, retentions and renewal occur.

Cultural hybridisation

The development of new cultural forms out of existing ones through a period of contact and interaction is referred to as ‘cultural hybridisation’. The term *creolisation* is used if this hybridisation took place in the context of European colonisation. Thus hybridisation and creolisation mean virtually the same thing in the Caribbean context. Cultural hybrids can be any mixture and combination of the original cultural forms. Cultural hybridisation is itself a process, and so the hybrids themselves change and develop over time. Religion, language and music are all aspects of culture where such hybridisation has occurred in the Caribbean.

BOX 4.9**Douglarisation**

In Trinidad and Tobago, and to a lesser extent in Guyana, there is a local variant of hybridisation/creolisation known as *douglarisation*. A 'douglar' is someone of mixed race African and Indian parentage. The word is derived from the Hindi word *dogla* meaning an illegitimate child of a mixed union between persons of different castes, and has been used as a derogatory term, particularly by the Indian community in Trinidad and Tobago. This has arisen from the colonial history of the country, especially from the privileging of lighter-coloured persons over darker-coloured, and the similar attitudes found in the caste system in India (see Box 4.6). 'Douglarisation' refers to the mixing of cultures occurring between the two groups, Afro-Trinidadians and East Indians, which has not always been harmonious. That being said, there is quite a noticeable presence of 'douglars' in the society today. Their presence suggests that the apparently deep polarisation between the two major ethnic groups in Trinidad and Tobago is a complex phenomenon that cannot be easily explained or described. There are discernible 'pockets' of mixing and mingling that go on despite historical attitudes and prejudices that are still dominant.

Religion

The major religions of the world met in the Caribbean region and underwent considerable hybridisation or syncretism into creolised forms. Some of these expressions were not very different from the original mould, and others were quite the opposite. The longer-established Christian denominations have undergone more of a process of syncretism than, say, Islam or Hinduism. Christianity, and its many denominations, came to the Caribbean with the Conquest and later through missionary activity. African religions came with the enslaved peoples and lived in their memories and imagination as they had limited opportunities to worship together and even then only in secret. Living in the Caribbean context and looking for a way to worship meaningfully – trying to fill the vacuum left in their cultural life when they were forcibly removed from their homeland – Africans created many syncretic religious forms that were adapted to their conditions of life. While they incorporated elements of the dominant

religion, namely Christianity, the way they perceived a creator and even the purpose of religion differed in significant ways from European **cosmology**. We shall look at syncretic religions in more detail in Chapter 6.

Cosmology refers to beliefs about the nature of the universe and reality.

Language

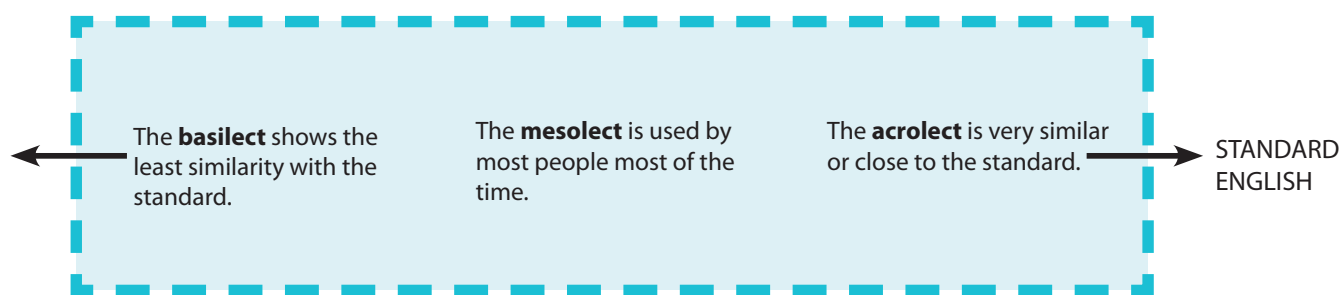
Caribbean languages are also replete with hybridities, mainly of the dominant European language liberally sprinkled with words from other languages, and transformed in unique ways by oral culture. The fact that the creole languages of the Caribbean largely exist in an oral tradition often makes them far more expressive and vivid than the European forms from which they grew. The African languages remembered by the enslaved population were usually not written languages, so that the creole forms which mixed, emerged and evolved differ greatly from the European 'master' language. These hybrid forms are variously referred to as patois or the creole.

Jamaica has an English-based patois and St Lucia a French-based patois, and they are languages in their own right, having been forged through a process of creolisation to produce something of immense hybridity, which continues to evolve and change. In each language the grammar has a typical structure, which differs remarkably from the standard, and there are words and expressions that have been created, used in unique ways or adopted from other languages. They are considered to be fully developed languages because they meet all the needs of their speakers in functioning in society. The creole is the first language (or 'mother tongue') of almost all the people resident in a Caribbean country.

ACTIVITY 4.7

1. Compare traditional and present-day attitudes in your country to hybrid forms of language, such as the creole.
2. Contrast the relative usefulness of the creole and standard forms of the language (e.g. Standard English) in your society and culture.

In each English-speaking Caribbean country it is fair to say that the creole exists as a continuum. At one end is the 'extreme' form of the creole (the *basilect*) and at the other is the *acrolect*, which is very close to Standard English (Fig. 4.4). Between are all manner of hybridities, appropriate for communicating in a host of different



The different varieties are used in different social contexts. Some persons can switch between a wider range of creole varieties than others.

Fig. 4.4 The creole language continuum

situations. In this 'zone of language use' the *mesolect* tends to be the language used by most creole speakers and it is easier to shift between different forms of the creole than to the standard form of the language (Craig, 1980).

Recently there has been more of an inclination to accept the creole as a language in its own right and we see its widespread use in the media. Great efforts have been made to standardise its written form and to compile dictionaries so that it can move from being purely oral to becoming a literary culture.

ACTIVITY 4.8

1. Demonstrate the use of different forms of the creole (for example, the basilect, mesolect and acrolect – see Fig. 4.4) by speaking in ways that may be appropriate:
 - a. at home among members of your close family;
 - b. for responding to the teacher in class;
 - c. in communicating with a foreign-based English speaker.
2. Linguists argue that Standard English is hardly ever spoken in the Caribbean. Even in very formal situations, such as giving a speech in parliament, it is not Standard English that is used. To what extent do you agree with this view?

French-lexicon creoles are found in the patois of

French-lexicon creoles are creole languages which use words from the French language.

Dominica and St Lucia, and those of the French territories of Martinique, Guadeloupe and Guyane (French Guiana), as well as in Haiti. In Haiti this is known as the Kreyòl and in Dominica as the Kwéyòl. The French-lexicon creoles of Trinidad, St Vincent and Grenada, which are not widely spoken today, are similar to the patois spoken

in St Lucia, Dominica, Martinique and Guadeloupe. However, the Haitian Creole is very different, no doubt because French was removed as an active influence by 1804 through revolution, so there was more scope for African linguistic forms and structures to be incorporated into the language. The structure of the language varies so considerably from French that in the past it has been argued that the Haitian Creole is actually a West African language (Ewe) with a French lexicon.

ACTIVITY 4.9

1. Discuss what may be problematic in the special language situation of St Lucia and Dominica, which are English-speaking countries with a French-based creole.
2. Persons from two Caribbean countries having English-based creoles (for example Jamaica and Barbados) may find difficulty in communicating. Suggest why that may be so.

How did creoles develop?

During the era of slavery, different cultural groups were brought to the Caribbean from all over West Africa, where they spoke different languages. The peoples of Dahomey, Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Gold Coast and Nigeria were all distinct ethnic groups. In the Caribbean, communication between Amerindians, Europeans and Africans had to depend on the development of a common language, or *lingua franca*.

Pidgins first developed as rudimentary forms of communication used largely for conducting business – slaving, trading, giving orders. Pidgins were just a set of words (usually only nouns and verbs) borrowed from the

vocabulary of different language speakers that over time became mutually intelligible. Gradually pidgins developed into whole, complex languages, mixing the lexicon of the dominant European language (and sometimes more than one European language) with that of West African languages (and sometimes with that of the Amerindians too), and evolving their own **syntax**,

Syntax refers to the rules of grammar and arranging words in sentences

with structures and expressions borrowed from both the Europeans and the Africans. The common West African linguistic device of repetition is identifiable in the creole: for example, instead of saying that ‘it is very big’, we often hear ‘it big big’. We also notice that a verb may sometimes not be necessary in order for meaning to be communicated.

Research mini-project

Conduct independent research to answer the following questions.

- 1 For the creole in your country, describe TWO ways in which it has been influenced by African languages, giving examples.
- 2 Explain the relationship between creoles, pidgins and dialects.
- 3 Describe the language of the Rastafari, discussing its lexicon, syntax and special features.

Music

We shall look in more detail at music in chapter 7 and chapter 8 but Activity 4.10 gives you the opportunity to analyse Caribbean music you know as a hybrid.

ACTIVITY 4.10

Using music as an example in any Caribbean country, identify any one form that you believe is a hybrid. Describe how that type of music evolved and whether on the present music scene the hybrid exists alongside the original forms as well as other forms that are difficult to classify.

The processes of cultural hybridisation

An understanding of the processes of cultural erasure, cultural retention and cultural renewal is important in any discussion of the hybridisation of cultures. These are

terms used to describe cultural change and can help us to begin to put our understandings of processes such as creolisation and hybridisation of cultures in perspective.

■ **Cultural retention.** Traditional Carib basketry designs and technologies continue in Dominica and elsewhere even as the surviving Carib populations change and adapt to modern life. A cultural retention usually refers to some specific aspect of a culture, for example within a language or religion. Cultural retention does not necessarily mean survival in an intact form. For example, in Belize, as we have seen, Garifuna culture is described as one where there are a remarkable number of cultural retentions. It was hybridised to begin with and it has since undergone some elements of mixing and hybridising with other cultures in Belize, but it is still sufficiently different to be regarded as an ethnic minority.

■ **Cultural renewal** occurs when a group goes through a conscious *rejuvenation* (renewal) process and returns to some elements of its culture which it believes have been ignored or suppressed. It comes about largely through a change of consciousness brought on by historical forces of change at a certain time. For example, the advent of Garveyism early in the twentieth century provided a core for the development of black consciousness not only in Jamaica but also in the wider Caribbean and North America (Chapter 14). The mobilisation of black people into understanding that they could be arbiters of their own destiny led to the development of labour unions, which eventually emerged in some countries as political parties challenging colonial rule. The Black Power movement of the 1970s in the Caribbean and elsewhere continued these themes of commitment to African consciousness and a reinterpretation of history to promote a Caribbean rather than an ethnocentric view of Caribbean history. African ethnic garb, hairstyles and names accompanied such efforts at cultural renewal, as well as interest in learning African languages, notably Swahili and Yoruba. There was also a heightened consciousness of Africa, and what was happening on the African continent – for example, the resistance movement and civil wars in the liberation of Angola and the apartheid struggles in South Africa.

■ **Cultural erasure** refers to practices that have died out or are dying out. Some debate whether a culture can be erased, given the extent of mixing that has gone on among the world’s peoples. Remember that in Chapter 3 we learned that culture was both material and non-material. Thus, a culture can survive based on the artefacts it has left behind. Non-material or symbolic culture is more difficult to trace.

The language of the Tainos or Arawaks of the Greater Antilles, for example, still survives in place names and in local dialects to some extent. However, even if we could not detect a trace, it is still problematic to say that a culture has been erased. The hybridity that would have resulted among different aboriginal groups over the centuries before the Conquest makes it extremely difficult to even think of Taino or Ciboney culture, or Carib culture, as separate and distinct. Thus, some Taino practices could have survived and be hybridised within local contexts in the Caribbean.

These terms ‘cultural erasure’, ‘cultural retention’ and ‘cultural renewal’ give us a broad understanding of cultural change. They are concepts that describe what is happening in a particular aspect of a culture. You will meet other terms here – enculturation, assimilation, transculturation and interculturalisation – which will serve to address how cultures change. They help to provide possible explanations for cultural erasure, cultural retention and cultural renewal, as well as hybridisation or creolisation.

4.3.3 Cultural Change

Enculturation

Enculturation occurs through the processes of either

Enculturation is a process of socialisation whereby a person becomes part of another’s culture.

acculturation or assimilation, which have been adopted as policies by the various European colonisers in the Caribbean. One has to be wary, though, of accepting the view that enculturation necessarily implies one’s original culture can actually be erased. During your own life it is possible that you remember practices that were once important and you do not see much of them anymore. Perhaps they were related to preparing for a festival such as Christmas, and while your family still celebrates Christmas, some of the traditions have disappeared, to be replaced by others. Perhaps you remember the ways of life you enjoyed growing up in a village that you no longer observe. In each case, one cannot say that the practice has been erased if it continues to live in your memory and imagination, and may still be continued by others. Enculturation alerts us to the idea that accepting a dominant culture may lead to cultural erasure – but not of everything – and that cultural retention (and possibly, at a later date, cultural renewal) will be part of the picture. This is further explained in Box 4.10 in reference to British colonising efforts and in the next section with regard to French colonial policies.

BOX 4.10

Enculturation and colonisation

One of the main ideas influencing British colonisation in the Caribbean was to develop an appreciation of British culture in the local people. This was done through a policy of acculturation – in this case involving the adoption of English as the official language, the use of a British curriculum in schools, and the telling of British stories espousing British values and customs, as well as the institution of British laws and systems of governance. In this way the colonised people would be socialised into a deep appreciation of British culture and follow many of its practices and customs. There was no expectation that Caribbean people would become British but that their original cultures would be sufficiently enculturated to produce a hybrid culture in which a British way of life was dominant.

Acculturation meant that some aspects of the culture of the Amerindians and Africans, especially, were erased. However, a unique culture was also born, a hybrid culture, where there was reverence and legitimacy given to British values and customs but at the same time Afrocentric and other cultural forms were also embraced, particularly in religion and language. Cultural retentions also persisted, as in African knowledge and use of herbal medicines and cooking traditions. In some societies cultural retentions are stronger than in others – notably, the Maroons and the Garifuna. Thus, the creole culture developed, as a thoroughly hybridised culture, alongside cultural retentions.

Assimilation

French colonisation (see Box 1.4) is a good example of **assimilation**. In contrast to British policy, the French

Assimilation occurs when a dominant group makes a bid to enculturate another by attempting to supplant all aspects of its culture and make it over into the image of the dominant group.

intended to convert their colonised people into French people, culturally speaking. Thus, local and indigenous customs, beliefs and yearnings were ignored. Martinique and Guadeloupe, for example, are considered to be part of France. This has created an ambivalent situation where the people, having undergone a creolising process,

identify both with their Caribbean nationality and their place as French citizens. In spite of the efforts and policies to enable the people of Martinique and Guadeloupe to think of themselves as French, a persistent theme in these countries is national identity and autonomy. **Aimé Césaire** is a celebrated Martinican who popularised *négritude*, a philosophy of black consciousness and racial pride (Chapter 14), which could be regarded as an example of cultural renewal.

Thus Caribbean people under conditions of acculturation and assimilation have not succumbed in their entirety to the dominant culture. They may have become enculturated, but only to a certain extent. Hybridising processes show that culture is not a passive entity that can be easily erased. In fact, it seems to be highly reactive and absorptive. While in the Francophone Caribbean French customs, curricula, laws and ways of life are generally evident, in each case they are hybridised forms, if not on paper then in practice. The French-based creole is a case in point, and certain festivals and celebrations, which are in fact cultural retentions, seen in villages and local communities are clearly evident as well. Thus, hybridisation has occurred, but aspects of cultural retention can still be identified, and cultural renewal as a heightened creole awareness and consciousness is receiving a lot of support in the French Caribbean.

Transculturation

Cuba, before and after the revolution, exemplifies the process of **transculturation**. The customs and ways of

Transculturation describes the process whereby a culture changes drastically, actually overcoming itself and translating into something new.

life of pre-revolutionary Cuba were fundamentally different from the socialist perspectives which prevailed after 1962. However, amidst sweeping social change and collectivisation of the economy, there were cultural beliefs and practices that continued almost unchanged. One of these was the attitude towards blacks in Cuban society. Even as late as 1948, Granados (2000) says that 'blacks basically remained condemned to manual labour and ... to being second class citizens' (p 131). While under the revolutionary regime their lot improved, Granados goes on to ask: 'How is it possible that after 35 years of socialism 90 per cent of the prison population is black?' (p 135). This is especially damning when we realise that blacks comprise less than 15 per cent of Cuba's population.

The experience of slavery affecting newly arrived Africans and creole Africans in the Caribbean could be described as a process of transculturation. Yet even amidst

comprehensive attempts at cultural erasure, Africans were able to retain elements of language and religion that were fashioned into complete, fully functioning hybrid cultures. 'Transculturation' is thus a broad, all-encompassing term referring to whole cultures, and in the case of slavery involves the experience, for newly arrived Africans, of moving from being steeped in African cultures to a hybrid culture. In the later history of the Caribbean we witness attempts to reverse this process through efforts at cultural renewal, largely via black consciousness. One can even argue that opposition to transculturation was going on from the very onset of slavery, where runaways set up Maroon communities – a rival culture based on cultural retentions.

Interculturation

Groups involved in **interculturalisation** do not necessarily

Interculturalisation refers to the mixing of cultures that goes on between groups who share a space.

give up their own culture but rather participate in various ways in each other's lives. Culturally plural societies are often described as societies where the groups meet but only limited mixing occurs. This is correct, but misleading; there is often much interaction between persons of different ethnicities within such cultures, which feed off each other, producing some degree of incorporation and merging. The extended example of Trinidad and Tobago given in Box 4.11 clarifies how interculturalisation may be evident in a culturally plural society.



SUMMARY

Hybridisation is a process that occurs in creole societies where different groups have met and forged relationships under conditions of oppression. Forced to live under conditions that suppressed their culture or their freedom to interact, they developed ways of coping and integrating that produced distinctly new cultural forms. While scholars have long recognised the existence of cultural hybridisations, they are not sure about how the process occurs. Thus terms like 'cultural erasure', 'cultural retention' and 'cultural renewal' have been used to describe elements of Caribbean society and culture, as well as terms that attempt to provide more explanatory power such as 'enculturation', 'acculturation', 'assimilation', 'transculturation' and 'interculturalisation'. Whether racial or cultural hybridisation, creole varieties of people, religions, customs and languages have contributed enormously to cultural diversity in the Caribbean.

BOX 4.11

Interculturation

Trinidad and Tobago is described as a culturally plural society where the major ethnic groups, namely Africans and Indians, meet but do not mix. Fairly rigid family and ethnic codes concerning marriage, voting patterns and sometimes business partnerships discourage the mixing of races or ethnic groups. While that is mainly true, it denies the complex and subtle mixing that goes on, which we can best describe as 'intercultural'. In Trinidad the Indians, Africans and mixed groups meet in their workplaces, schools, churches and leisure pursuits. They form friendships and tend to appreciate certain areas of each other's culture. For example, Indian foods and 'creole' dishes are part of the diet of all ethnic groups. Festivals and celebrations of each group are appreciated, mainly for their culinary aspects and the accompanying holidays. Food seems to be a cultural value that transcends racial lines and unifies the people.

Almost all religious groups celebrate Christmas and there seems to be a widespread feeling that it is a national holiday rather than a Christian celebration. Hindus, Muslims and others have appropriated Christmas in ways that do not necessarily endorse its religious nature, regarding it as something akin to a national celebration. And there is widespread participation by all ethnic groups in Carnival, and that includes playing pan, designing and building costumes, singing calypsos and chutney, and participating as masqueraders and fete-goers. In parts of the country where the ethnic groups live side by side, there is closer community and intermixing. Among urban Christian Indians there is more intermixing with Afro-Trinidadians than among

traditional Hindus and Muslims. It is important, too, to recognise that Hindus and Muslims are two distinct ethnic groups, with different customs, beliefs, languages and celebrations. Where these two ethnic groups intermarry there is a form of intercultural that springs up in religious observances and customs generally. The mixed population has to a larger extent than other ethnic groups intermixed with all other ethnic groups in the country. Miscegenation has long occurred between the Chinese population and Afro-Trinidadians. Thus, even though there are social and cultural norms that keep the ethnic groups from integrating, a significant amount of mixing still occurs.

This mixing has produced a level of interaction and knowledge about each other's ways that can either be deepened or remain superficial. Soca and calypso have been hybridised with Indian rhythms to form chutney and chutney soca. *Parang*, the traditional Christmas music sung in Spanish and a cultural retention from the days of Spanish colonisation, has also been hybridised into parang soca, and there is ongoing experimentation. It may be rather early to say that these are hybridised forms because they are still emerging, but clearly attempts at hybridity arise from an initial intercultural phase.

Intercultural, then, is occurring ceaselessly but deep-seated changes are only evident in certain areas of cultural life. In those areas genuine hybridisations seem to be in the making. In trying to analyse cultures and cultural change, a degree of mixing may be discerned that can best be described as intercultural.



Wrap Up

In this chapter certain characteristic features of Caribbean society and culture, such as cultural diversity, hybridisation, social stratification and social mobility, have been investigated in order to consider their effect on cultural identity. Each has been analysed in order to show its usefulness in describing Caribbean society and culture. Cultural diversity has been deconstructed to reveal certain assumptions that tended to privilege the notion of difference over commonalities, and show how an emphasis on difference prevents us from recognising our common experiences in the Caribbean.

Hybridisation has been explored, evident in the many ethnic and cultural hybrids in Caribbean society and culture. The process of creolisation that produced these hybrids has been portrayed as something unique, created in Caribbean societies, and thus a common theme across the region. Studying social stratification has revealed the persistence of common elements inherited from historical experience. While social mobility played a role in changing this traditional social structure, strong commonalities are still evident between Caribbean societies then and now.

Research TOPICS

Language is a topical issue which you can identify for further investigation, focusing on the attitudes shown by different groups towards the creole in your country. You could design a questionnaire about the appropriateness of using the creole in a variety of contexts. You may select individuals from different 'populations' – teachers, students, parents, employers, older persons, and so on – and use some of the ideas listed below.

1. Which language do you speak most of the time – Standard English or the creole?
2. When do you tend to use each form – at school, with friends, giving a speech, in writing (these are choices you give them).
3. Which do you prefer to use?
4. Give reasons for your preference.

Choose a method of presenting the data graphically. Pie charts could be used to summarise and present the information for the first question based on the categories of people who answer – students, teachers, adults, and so on. A bar graph could be used to present the data for question 2 and a table could summarise the information from the third and fourth questions. Then as researcher you will need to interpret the trends and patterns that the statistical graphs and diagrams reveal.

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Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Explain what is meant by the term 'cultural diversity'. (1 mark)
- (b) Identify TWO different types of cultural diversity in each of TWO Caribbean countries. (2 marks)
- (c) Explain how they differ and why. (3 marks)
- 2 (a) Define the term 'ethnicity'. (1 mark)
- (b) Explain why 'race' and 'ethnicity' are often used interchangeably. (2 marks)
- (c) Give THREE reasons why the concept of race is now considered to be flawed. (3 marks)
- 3 (a) Explain what is meant by a plural society and give an example. (2 marks)
- (b) Describe TWO issues experienced by groups in plural societies in the Caribbean. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) Explain what is meant by (i) 'cultural erasure'; and (ii) cultural retention. (2 marks)
- (b) Give ONE example of cultural erasure and ONE example of cultural retention in Caribbean society. (4 marks)
- 5 (a) Explain why the Maroons are considered to be an ethnic group. (2 marks)
- (b) Describe ONE way in which the Maroons are similar to and ONE way in which they are different from mainstream Caribbean society and culture. (4 marks)
- 6 (a) Explain the difference between ascribed and achieved status. (2 marks)
- (b) Account for TWO differences that have occurred in the social structure of Caribbean society from the plantation era to the present. (4 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Examine the processes of cultural hybridisation in Caribbean society and culture.
- 2 Choose ONE ethnic group in an identified Caribbean country and discuss the extent to which it has been able to access social mobility today.
- 3 Identify any aspect of culture and society in your country where you can recognise examples of (a) cultural erasure and (b) cultural retention. Explain your reasons in labelling some aspect of cultural life as a 'retention' rather than a 'hybrid'.
- 4 Choose ONE ethnic group in Caribbean society and culture and show how its members' sense of cultural identity has been influenced by the experiences they have had.
- 5 'It is believed that cultural diversity poses several problems for Caribbean society and culture.' Identify and account for TWO of those beliefs.

Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 'The Caribbean is a region where cultural differences far outweigh any commonalities that might exist. These differences occur within and between the various societies and cultures of the Caribbean.' Assess this statement.
- 2 Discuss the nature of the challenge in Caribbean society and culture in finding ways to mediate group differences.
- 3 'Creolisation leads to the development of entirely new cultures.' Evaluate this point of view using examples of religion, language and music in Caribbean society and culture.
- 4 'In the options they exercised about Caribbean space, and thus their relationships with other groups, they were forging an identity'. Explain what this statement means in relation to EITHER (a) the Chinese population in an identified Caribbean country, OR (b) the aboriginal population in an identified Caribbean country.

5

The Impact of Geographical Phenomena



Pyroclastic flow from volcanic eruption, Plymouth, Montserrat

We have already looked briefly at a number of geographical phenomena, mainly with respect to geographical location in Chapter 1. In this chapter, we will examine some of the ways in which disasters can bring destruction on human life and habitation, along with environmental problems such as soil erosion, drought and the destruction of coral reefs that have come about as a result of poor human choices. It is important to realise that instead of feeling vulnerable and resigned about these problems there is much that we can do to mitigate disasters and improve the ecological situation in which we find ourselves.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. explain the theory of plate tectonics with reference to the Caribbean;
2. describe the nature, occurrence and social and economic consequences of hurricanes, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions;
3. show how human activity determines whether an environmental hazard becomes an environmental disaster;
4. evaluate various perspectives on the relationship between Caribbean peoples and their environment;
5. discuss soil erosion, drought and the destruction of coral reefs as examples of environmental degradation;
6. suggest mitigation strategies to control and/or reduce the adverse effects of environmental disasters on Caribbean society and culture.

5.1 Earthquakes, volcanoes and hurricanes

5.1.1 The Phenomenon of Plate Tectonics

Although earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are uncommon – much less prevalent than hurricanes in terms of their effects on Caribbean communities, when they do occur they are often extremely destructive. Two recent examples are:

- The devastation created by the major earthquake in Haiti in 2010, in which hundreds of thousands of people may have been killed (the death toll is still uncertain) and the capital, Port au Prince, was virtually destroyed. Millions of people are still existing in camps and temporary shelters.
- The evacuation in 1997 of much of the island of Montserrat as a result of an eruption in the Soufrière Hills, which was considered **dormant** rather than

Dormant volcanoes have not been active for a considerable period of time, but are still considered capable of erupting.

active. The capital, Plymouth, has been abandoned as the seat of administration, with new government buildings being constructed at Little Bay in the north-west of the island.

The twin phenomena of **seismic activity** and volcanic activity are both explained by the theory of plate tectonics.

Seismic activity describes any Earth movement caused by the Earth's tectonic plates. Only high-level seismic activity leads to earthquakes.

ACTIVITY 5.1

Mapwork

1. Study Fig. 5.1 carefully. Make a list of places where both earthquake incidence and volcanic activity occur together, and a list of places where they do not.
2. Draw a map of the Caribbean and mark on it only the places where earthquakes and volcanic eruptions both occur.
3. Can you see any patterns of locations that seem significant worldwide or in the Caribbean region? Does it make any difference if you add extinct volcanoes to the map (you may have to do some independent research to find their locations)?

The theory of plate tectonics

According to the theory of plate tectonics, earthquakes and volcanoes are related in their origins. Fig. 5.1 shows that across certain regions of the globe volcanoes and earthquakes occur in similar locations. There have been a number of attempts to trace the apparent movement of land masses, for example the theory of continental drift (Box 5.1), but these did not address why such movement occurred. The theory of plate tectonics states that the Earth's crust is composed of several large slabs or plates of rigid crustal materials and some smaller ones, which are



Fig. 5.1 Earthquake and volcano hotspots

in continuous movement. Both oceans and land masses may be 'carried' on a plate. The Caribbean Plate (see Fig. 1.3) is one of the smaller plates. Where one plate meets another, at a plate margin or boundary, several kinds of tectonic activities (movement or displacement of rocks) may result. This explains why the Caribbean is one of the world's 'hotspots' for volcanic and seismic activity.

Scientists discovered that the rocks in the centre of the oceans were the youngest and on each side they got progressively older as they came closer to the continents. They realised that new rocks were welling up from the *mantle* of the Earth, as *magma*, and solidifying into rocks on the surface, and these rocks were then pushed to either side by new upwelling magma (see Fig. 5.2).

They theorised that if new crust was being formed at certain places on the Earth's surface then there must be places where it was disappearing. The theory of plate tectonics provided the answers to some of these puzzles.

The plates move relative to each other because of convection currents in the mantle. There are three kinds of plate margins, based on the nature of contact between the plates.

■ **Divergent margins.** Sea-floor spreading was first detected at these margins, leading to the development of the theory of plate tectonics. In the Atlantic Ocean new crust upwells as magma

A convergent margin showing one plate descending into the mantle

Continent on a plate that is colliding with another. The crust is about 70 km thick

Convection currents in the mantle (molten material)

A divergent margin, magma is upwelling from the mantle, through a submarine volcano

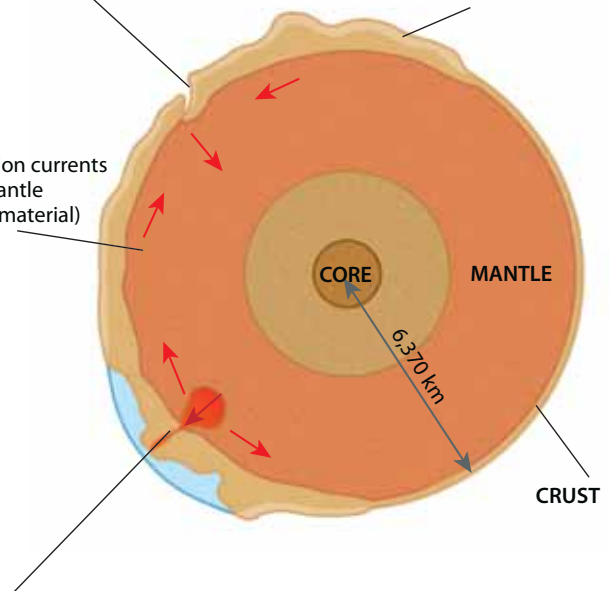


Fig. 5.2 The structure of the Earth, showing convergence and divergence

BOX 5.1**Continental drift**

Ever since maps were first made, people have hypothesised that the continents have drifted around over time. Early ideas about this were suggested by the shape of South America and Africa, which appear to be able to fit together. Historical and fossil evidence also suggested that some places had enjoyed an altogether different climate than the present one. This could imply either climate change or continental drift. Stronger evidence came in the form of similar, and in some cases identical geological formations, e.g. in West Africa and north-eastern Brazil.

These observations were also made in different parts of the globe, suggesting movements of land masses on a worldwide scale. It was hypothesised that there was originally only one landmass, Pangea, from which the continents broke off and have been moving ever since. However strong the circumstantial evidence was, the theory could not explain how and why this happened, until the phenomenon of sea-floor spreading was identified.

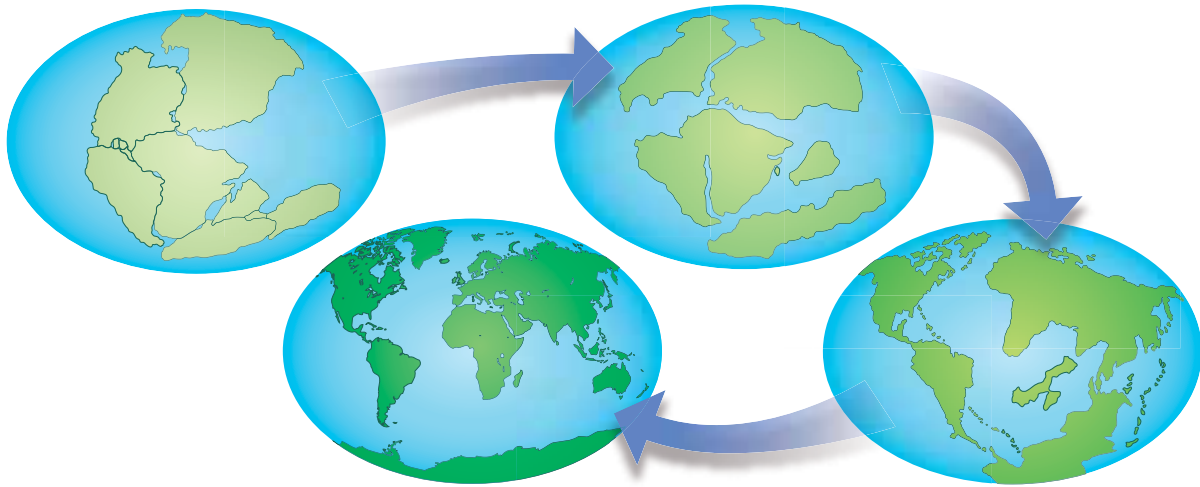


Fig. 5.3 Continental drift

from the mantle, and then flows west and east, pushing older rocks in front of it. The Mid-Atlantic Ridge, running the entire length of the Atlantic Ocean from the northern to the southern hemisphere, is a line of submarine volcanoes and fissures that mark the site of a divergent margin (Fig. 5.4). Volcanic and earthquake activity are characteristic of such margins and they have been found in all oceans. The rocks are continually being pushed by the upwelling magma, resulting in earthquakes.

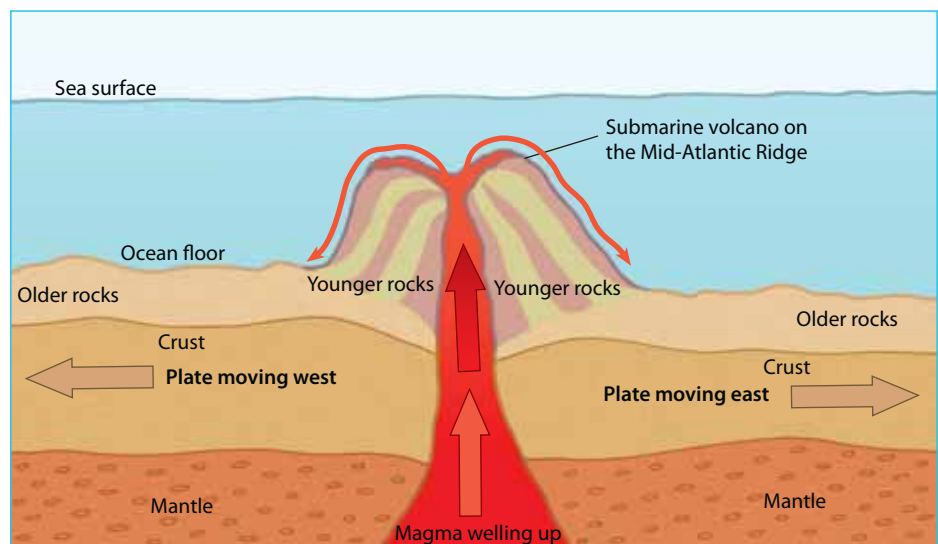


Fig. 5.4 A divergent plate margin

■ **Convergent margins.** These represent sites where crust is being consumed or pushed back down into the mantle, a process known as *subduction*. Along these margins plates collide and one plate rides over the other, forcing it downwards into the subduction zone. The descending plate is crushed as it grinds together with the other plate that is pushing over it. This friction generates tremendous heat, enough to melt the crustal rocks, and so as the plate descends into the mantle the rock material becomes molten. The many holes, crevices and cracks in the surface rocks allow some of this magma to flow back up to the surface to form volcanoes. Along convergent margins the tremendous pressures generated by rocks exerting great force against each other inevitably results in earthquakes as the rocks move suddenly to accommodate the stress. The constant grinding and scraping of rocks against each other also results in the deposition of a great deal of sediments in the area. Sometimes these form islands that are flat and low-lying, but this is nevertheless part of mountain-building activity. Hence, volcanic, seismic and tectonic activity are found along convergent plate margins. (Fig. 5.5 shows a cross section through the Lesser Antilles, where there is a convergent margin.)

■ **Transform margins.** Where plates slide past each other pressures build up in the rocks in each plate and earthquake activity results when the rocks move suddenly to relieve the stress (Fig. 5.6). Normally only seismic activity is found at transform plate margins. The San Andreas Fault along the coast of western North America is an extensive transform margin.

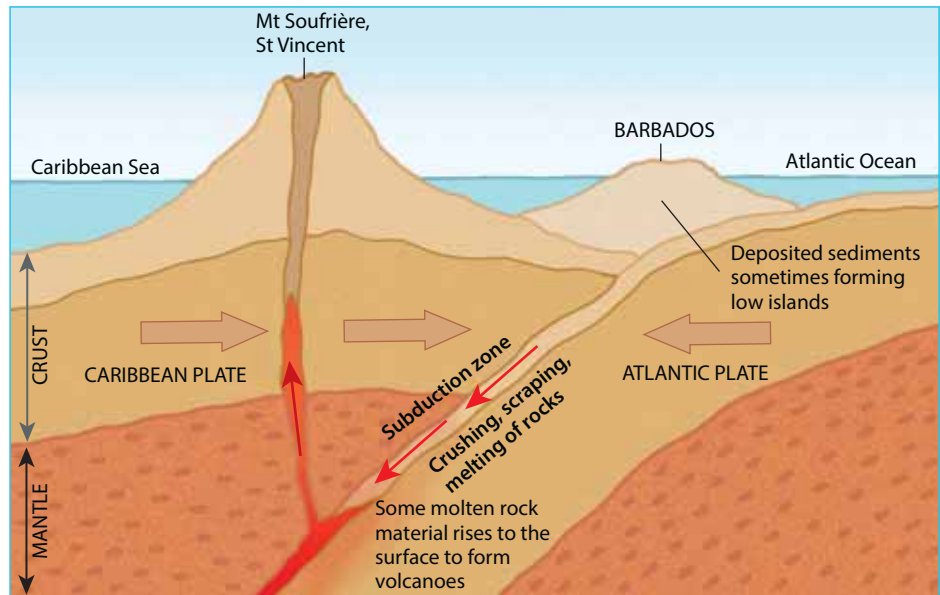


Fig. 5.5 A convergent plate margin: cross section across the Eastern Caribbean

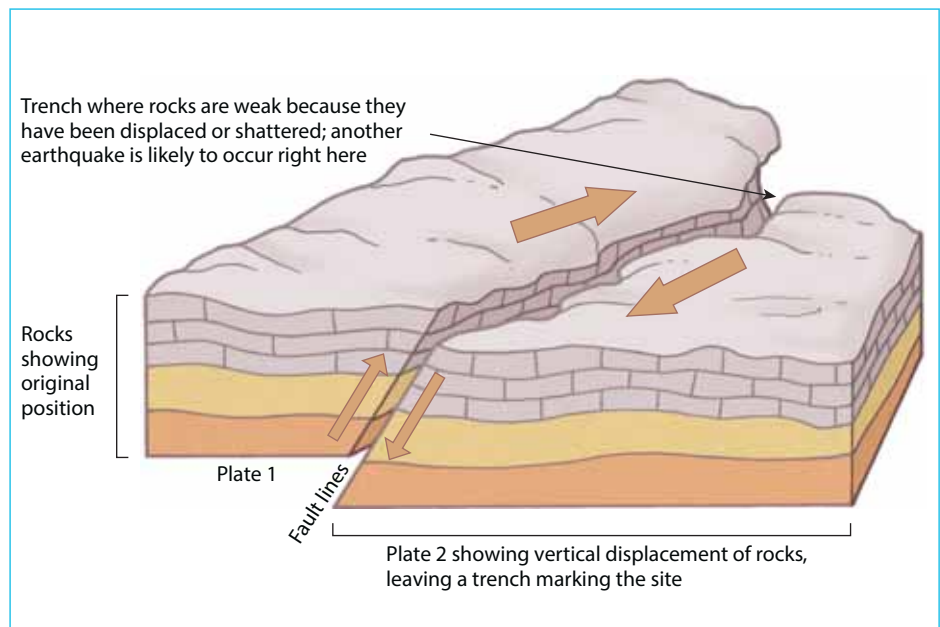


Fig. 5.6 A transform plate margin

The Caribbean Plate

Although the Caribbean Plate is one of the smaller plates covering the globe, it is extremely complex and still not fully understood.

■ The transform boundary in the northern Caribbean was once a convergent margin with active volcanoes. Today the islands of the Greater Antilles have only extinct volcanoes but the change from convergent to transform indicates dynamic processes that are not easily evident to researchers.

- There is a small divergent margin growing in the Cayman Trench area, complicating the already complex geology of the region.
- The boundaries between the Nazca, Cocos and Caribbean plates are as yet not clearly defined.
- The convergent margin along the Lesser Antilles is still posing questions to geologists. It is a double island arc with mountainous, volcanic islands in the inner arc (Martinique, Montserrat, Dominica) and flat, low-lying limestone islands in the outer arc (Barbados, Anguilla). The centre of active **vulcanicity** seems to

Vulcanicity describes the processes involved in volcanic activity.

be shifting southwards, so that Saba is thought to be now extinct and Kick 'em Jenny, a submarine volcano just north of Grenada, is increasingly active.

The Caribbean Plate is thus a highly active tectonic 'hotspot'.

- The presence of deep ocean trenches off Cayman, Puerto Rico and Hispaniola indicate major plate boundaries with the potential for serious earthquakes of 7.5 and higher on the Richter scale or MMS (see Box 5.2), capable of generating **tsunamis**.

A **tsunami** is a mighty wall of water travelling at great speeds from the site of an undersea earthquake.

- The meeting of convergent and transform margins at the southern margin of the plate is responsible for the extreme faulting and unstable nature of rocks in

Trinidad and northern Venezuela bringing petroleum, natural gas and pitch-bearing rocks to the surface. (Trinidad is on the South American Plate and Tobago on the Caribbean Plate.)

- There are about 17 active volcanoes in the Eastern Caribbean, all connected at a subterranean level along the plate margin. Eruptions in one volcano can trigger eruptions in other islands. On 7 May 1902 Mt Soufrière in St Vincent erupted followed by Mt Pelée in Martinique causing the combined loss of 30 000 lives.
- The western edge of the Caribbean Plate in the Pacific Ocean off the west coast of Central America is even more active than the eastern margin. The convergent margins in the west record higher subduction rates than along the Lesser Antilles and consequently earthquakes are much stronger. In 1972 an earthquake totally destroyed Managua, the capital of Nicaragua, and an equally destructive earthquake shook Guatemala in 1976. The potential for very strong earthquakes is high in the Central American Region and the shocks may affect the Greater Antilles. Volcanoes are more numerous than in the Lesser Antilles and there have been more violent eruptions as well.

5.1.2 Earthquakes

All the plate margins described above generate earthquakes. An earthquake is a vibration or tremor that occurs in the crust when there is a release of energy by rocks. This happens when there is a steady build-up of pressure in the rocks (through plates riding over each other at convergent margins, sliding past each other at

BOX 5.2 Measuring earthquakes

The scale most people have heard of is the Richter scale, which derives from a mathematical (logarithmic) calculation based on the energy released by an earthquake. You will hear of earthquake measurements on the Richter scale on the mass media. However, most geologists and volcanologists (specialising in the study of volcanic eruptions) now use the **moment magnitude scale** (or MMS), which uses a different type of calculation but provides similar measures of earthquake magnitude. An earthquake measuring 5.0 on the scale is ten times as strong as one measuring 4.0. Below 5.0 on the scale, the earthquake is minor, and below 3.0 may not even be felt by those living near its epicentre. The convergent margin of the

Lesser Antilles can generate earthquakes of 7.0 and higher, with a probability of once in every 20 years. Destructive earthquakes occur above 6.0, with only a few historically being measured above 9.0. The earthquake measured at 9.1 that occurred off the coast of Japan in 2011, which was accompanied by a tsunami, caused immense damage even to a highly developed country, and caused fears of nuclear disaster when some of Japan's nuclear power plants were affected. The largest earthquake ever recorded occurred in Chile in May 1960, with a magnitude of 9.5 MMS. More recently, in April 2014, a major earthquake in the same area, but this time off the coast, was measured at 8.2 MMS.

transform margins or being pushed away by upwelling magma at divergent margins). When the rocks cannot accommodate the stresses any longer, they move and release energy. This energy may cause extreme displacement of rocks, which shift or move (Fig. 5.6), sometimes leaving a trench along the fault lines – with adverse consequences for the population, particularly in built-up areas. And this dislocation may occur on ocean floors as well. If there is a major shift in the rocks, a tsunami develops that can inundate large sections of the coast, often with little warning (as occurred in the Indian Ocean in December 2004). The energy released in an earthquake can be measured to give an idea of the earthquake's magnitude (see Box 5.2). Generally, massive earthquakes, though they may be followed by aftershocks for a short period, occur only rarely, with long intervals between, since the major movement of the crust relieves the pressures for longer than in a minor earthquake.

An earthquake leaves a fracture or fault in rocks – a line of weakness where future earthquakes are likely to recur. There are major faults at plate margins, and in the Caribbean the convergent and transform margins are the sites of numerous fault lines, indicating weakness in the rocks and areas of crustal instability.

In addition to tsunamis, earthquakes and faulting can result in landslides, rock slides and mudslides that may cause much more damage than the earthquake itself. In the aftermath of an earthquake, aftershocks can be dangerous, in that already weakened buildings are likely to collapse. Most of the deaths caused by an earthquake result from falling masonry and buildings. Threats to life also occur when gas and electricity lines and water mains are disrupted, so that there is also the danger of uncontrolled fires and the spread of disease. To reduce vulnerability to these threats there should be some serious consideration given to ways of improving earthquake mitigation and even prediction (Box 5.3; see also §5.1.5 on disaster mitigation in general).

5.1.3 Volcanoes

Volcanoes are found on both divergent and convergent plate margins. In the Caribbean the two convergent margins are the sites of both active and dormant volcanoes. Active volcanoes have erupted within the last few hundred years and dormant volcanoes have not erupted for hundreds of years. Compared to volcanoes on divergent margins (e.g. Hawaii), where lava continuously and quietly erupts, volcanoes on convergent margins erupt with great force. This is related to the type of magma that develops at each margin. At convergent margins the

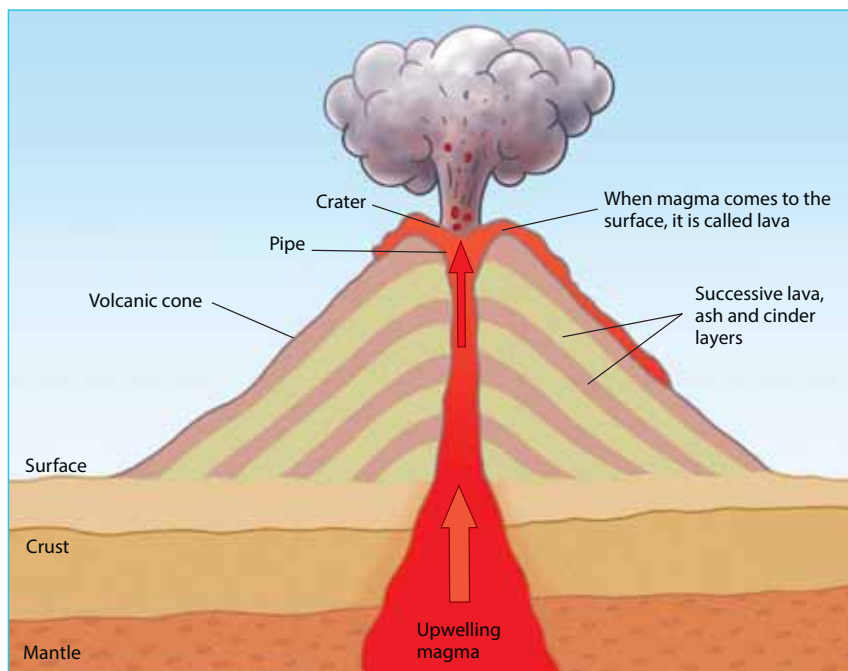


Fig. 5.7 The structure of a volcano



Fig. 5.8 The 1995 eruption in Montserrat's Soufrière Hills

BOX 5.3

Predicting earthquakes and mitigating their effects

Since falling masonry and other built structures constitute the main hazard during an earthquake, mitigation efforts need to focus on the materials used in construction and the strict enforcement of building codes, as well as an evaluation of the geology of the site. These are long-term strategies that are born out of a commitment to public safety and civic responsibility and which rest on a strong geographical awareness about the environmental threats that Caribbean people face. If people are aware, for example of how an earthquake affects a building, they may be more wary of building tall structures on reclaimed land or on poorly consolidated rock, or they may be more demanding about building codes and inspections. During an earthquake the lower part of a building moves forward with the ground movement but the upper part remains still. As the lower part rebounds the top half now begins the forward movement. Buildings can be literally torn in two, especially if they do not have strong lateral bracing.

Some headway has been made in predicting earthquakes. Funding for research in this and other areas of environmental hazards tend to handicap Caribbean nations. Long-term record-keeping and measuring the build-up of stress in faulted rocks leads to the development of a database that helps

prediction efforts. In China observations such as the water level in deep wells, the unusual behaviour of animals and the presence of radioactive gases have been used to predict some earthquakes. However, it is not a precise science – it is impossible to tell where the focus of an earthquake would be (its point of origin deep in the crust or the mantle) and so it is difficult to predict the epicentre (the spot directly above the focus on the surface). Educated guesswork, then, usually influences decisions about which areas to evacuate when some scientific data are at hand foretelling the preconditions for an earthquake. However, that is a more comfortable scenario than one where there are no attempts at prediction.

Since the earthquake of 26 December 2004 and the resulting tsunami in Indonesia and South East Asia, there have been increasing calls for an efficient early warning system to alert people in a wide perimeter around epicentres of any earthquake event about the possibility of there being aftershocks or tsunamis. Although geologists are on the whole doubtful that such a destructive tsunami is likely to affect the Caribbean, the best course of action is to emphasise the importance of early warning systems and regular drills and simulations conducted by disaster preparedness organisations.

molten magma is thick and viscous so that when left in the pipe of the volcanic cone after an eruption, the new emerging magma for another eruption has to forcibly eject the old plug of lava. This is what happened when Mt Pelée erupted in 1902. Sometimes part of the volcano itself is blown apart in such an eruption, or the top or crater sinks to form a large caldera. (Fig. 5.7 illustrates the structure of a volcano.)

When a volcano erupts with great force, the lava and surrounding rocks are blown to bits, producing ash and cinders. Larger fragments falling back to Earth, volcanic bombs, can also be dangerous. The molten lava that pours out and flows down the sides of the volcano is several hundred degrees Celsius, so that all life forms, buildings and other structures are wiped out. The 1995 eruption in Montserrat's Soufrière Hills was accompanied by **pyroclastic flows** (Fig. 5.8). Remarkably only 20 persons were killed, but the continuing eruption forced the

Pyroclastic flows are huge clouds of ash and cinders mixed with poisonous gases, reducing visibility to zero.

evacuation of thousands and the south of the island is still regarded as unsafe. Society and culture in Montserrat is still trying to recover. In the 1902 eruption of Mt Pelée, clouds of poisonous gases, *nuées ardentes* and pyroclastic flows destroyed the town and 20 000 residents of St Pierre. This was probably the deadliest eruption of the twentieth century and was related to the eruption of Mt Soufrière nearby in St Vincent, where 200 lives were lost.

Research mini-project

- 1 Research data for a table showing major volcanic eruptions and earthquakes (i.e. those that caused significant disruption to local communities) in the Caribbean since 1950. Plot the data on a map of the region, with the date and the name of the volcano or scale of the earthquake in each case.
- 2 Choose one eruption or earthquake and research the impact that was felt by local communities.

SUMMARY

The theory of plate tectonics describes the division of the Earth's crust into sections or 'plates', which govern the movement of landmasses on the Earth's crust and how these movements create the conditions for earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. The upwelling of magma from beneath the Earth's crust, which occurs in the deepest parts of the oceans and pushes older rocks aside, and the subduction of sections of the Earth's crust nearer the continents cause pressures to build up where the tectonic plates meet. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions can both cause severe destruction and social displacement where they occur close to human habitation, and a tsunami can affect areas at great distances across the ocean from the epicentre of the earthquake that set it off.

5.1.4 Hurricanes

From 1 June to 30 November, as the tropical Atlantic warms up, the tropical marine climate in the Caribbean experiences a number of low-pressure systems, some of which grow into fully developed hurricanes. In 2005, however, the hurricane season lasted until January 2006 and it became necessary to use the Greek alphabet as the names assigned for the season using our normal alphabet were exhausted.

What is a low-pressure system?

Normal **atmospheric pressure** at sea level is 1013

Atmospheric pressure is the weight of the air pressing down on the Earth's surface.

millibars (mb). On a warm, sunny day in the Caribbean the pressure readings will be close to this measurement. Atmospheric pressure by its very nature is greater nearer sea level than on top of a high mountain.

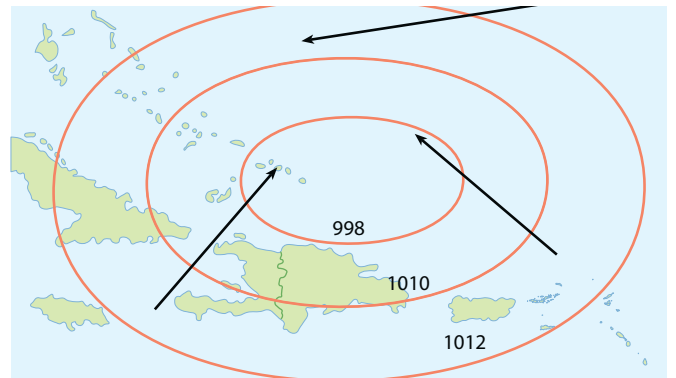
An area that is extremely warm will also experience low pressure because the tendency of warm air is to rise. Atmospheric pressure is measured by a barometer and recorded on maps as lines joining places of equal pressure at sea level – isobars (Fig. 5.9).

The difference in atmospheric pressure between one place and another generates winds. If the pressure drops considerably, the isobars are drawn close together (Fig. 5.9c), showing that there is a steep pressure gradient generating a strong wind. Generally speaking, winds blow from high-pressure areas to low-pressure areas.

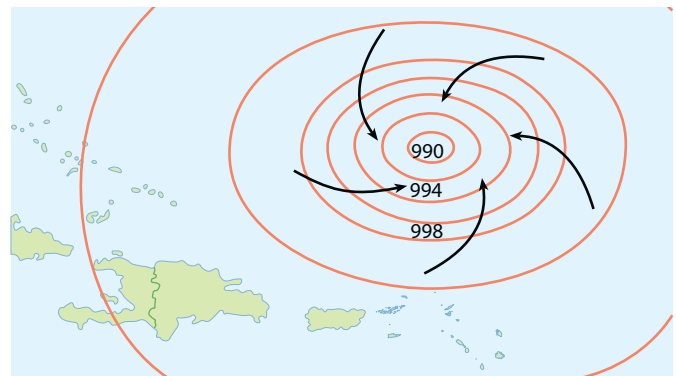
Sometimes the north-east trades bring weather systems into the Caribbean which have pronounced low pressure. These are systems where the air is rising (leaving low pressure in the atmosphere beneath) because of unusually warm ocean temperatures (as the tendency of hot air is to rise). Such systems may develop into hurricanes, which are areas of intense low pressure, causing strong in-blowing winds.



(a) isobars show pressure increasing gradually over an area



(b) isobars show a low-pressure system, a gentle pressure gradient. Gentle winds blow from high pressure to low pressure



(c) a hurricane, an intense low-pressure system, very low pressures, a steep pressure gradient and strong winds, spiralling inwards

Fig. 5.9 Atmospheric pressure on weather maps

Features of a hurricane

A hurricane has three major characteristics:

- extremely low pressure;
- strong winds;
- heavy convective rainfall.

Hurricanes are well-organised low-pressure systems that may be several hundred kilometres across (Fig. 5.10). They move at only about 12–15 mph so there is potential for extreme destruction as they take several hours to pass over an area. There is a sequence in how a hurricane affects an area.

- The first half of the hurricane normally has winds spiralling in from the north-west and west, with increasing intensity of rainfall and winds as the eye wall approaches.
- Then the eye passes, an area of relative calm, with winds sinking rather than rising.
- The second half of the hurricane then arrives, with winds now blowing from the south-west and south-east.
- The area of most intense pressures, strongest winds and heaviest rainfall is the eye wall – the tall cumulonimbus clouds ringing the eye of the hurricane.

If the winds are between 40 and 74 mph (65–120 kph), the system is labelled a tropical storm. Once the winds are over 75 mph a Category 1 hurricane has formed. The

Saffir-Simpson scale classifies hurricanes according to wind speed:

- Category 1: 75–95 mph (120–150 kph)
- Category 2: 96–110 mph (150–175 kph)
- Category 3: 111–130 mph (175–210 kph)
- Category 4: 131–144 mph (210–250 kph)
- Category 5: over 155 mph (250 kph)

How hurricanes form

Off the coast of Africa in the period June to November each year the high temperatures of the oceans spawn local convective disturbances, usually areas of unstable weather (winds and rain), which are brought into the Caribbean by the prevailing winds. Only a few of these go through all the developmental stages from being a tropical storm or easterly wave, a tropical depression and a tropical storm to becoming a hurricane. The process is described in Box 5.4 on page 117 and illustrated in Fig 5.10.

- In all these systems convection (the uplift of air) is the main process at work, producing thunderstorms and heavy convective rainfall. However, when the convection is so strong that there is continuous uplift of air and cooling to produce tall clouds, a weather system of great vertical extent starts to emerge.
- As the water vapour in the rising air cools, high in the atmosphere, to produce clouds (water droplets), enormous energy is released by the latent heat of condensation

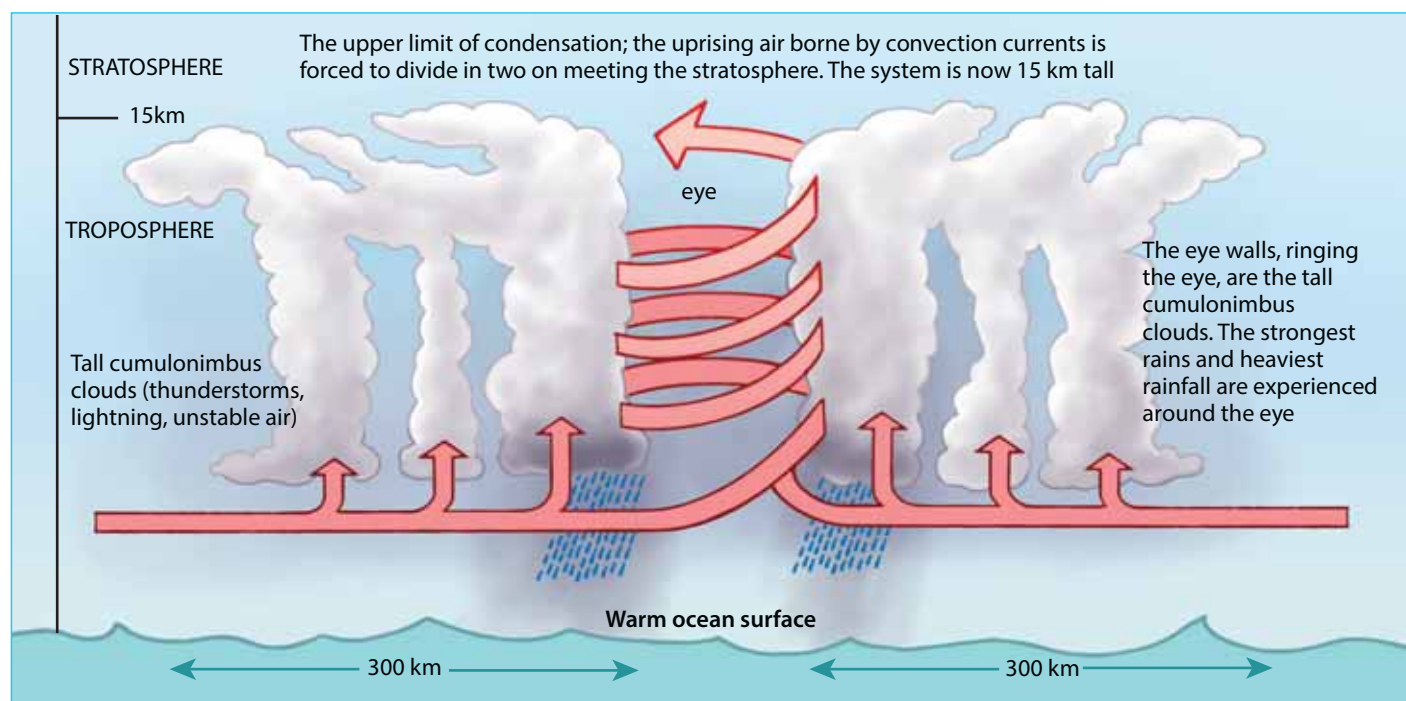


Fig. 5.10 Cross section through a hurricane

(the energy that was originally used in evaporation to convert water to water vapour). This produces warm conditions at great heights, thereby encouraging air to continue to rise long after the point where it would have normally condensed to form clouds.

- Air in such a system is buoyant, continuing to rise and forming towering cumulonimbus clouds (producing thunderstorms).
- Pressure continues to drop because of the rising air (Fig. 5.10). This system is unstable and it can be perpetuated if it continues to travel over warm waters. It develops into a tropical storm or a hurricane once its vertical extent is large enough to be affected by what is known as the **Coriolis Force**.

The **Coriolis Force** is the force that is exerted on an air mass by the spinning of the Earth.

- The Coriolis Force imparts a spinning effect to the entire weather system.
- Within the system pressure is so low that a steep pressure gradient occurs from outside to inside the system. Inside a hurricane pressures may reach 880 mb. Consequently, very strong and powerful winds are generated across the steep pressure gradients.

ACTIVITY 5.2

Draw a flow chart showing the stages in formation of a hurricane.

Hurricane tracks

Hurricane tracks are an interesting area of study for meteorologists and provide vital information for Caribbean people. Most of the hurricanes affecting the Caribbean originate off the coast of Africa, in the Atlantic Ocean, and are brought by the prevailing winds westwards into the Caribbean. The Lesser Antilles are usually the first areas of landfall for a hurricane making its way into the Caribbean. Every year at least one island in the Lesser Antilles is likely to be affected by a hurricane. However, the islands in the archipelago are located so close to each other that if an island does not score a direct hit, it will certainly feel the winds and rains in the outer or feeder bands, as well as the high waves and storm surges. From the Lesser Antilles, meteorologists have to rely on computer models and up-to-date weather information from inside the hurricane (usually from satellites or special airplanes and ships) to make forecasts about the possible tracks that a hurricane might take. They usually adopt a north-westward route, which may

take them straight to Jamaica and other islands in the Greater Antilles. From there they may threaten the Bahamas, Florida and the Gulf States of the United States, or they may move westward, reaching Belize and Central America. This was a major reason why the capital of Belize was moved from Belize City on the coast to Belmopan in the interior. Occasionally hurricanes form in the Caribbean Sea or the Gulf of Mexico.

ACTIVITY 5.3

4. a. Conduct independent research to fill in the blanks in Table 5.1 below.
 - e. Add in any other major (Category 4 or 5) hurricanes you discover in your research.
2. On a blank outline map of the Caribbean, plot the tracks of TWO of the hurricanes listed in the table.
 - a. For ONE of the hurricanes you have plotted, explain how it increased and decreased in strength along its course.
 - b. Identify the countries which were most seriously affected and describe how they were affected.

YEAR	NAME	HIGHEST HURRICANE CATEGORY REACHED
1980	Allen	4
1988	Gilbert	
2004	Ivan	5
	Andrew	5
	Hugo	4
	Katrina	
2005	Dennis	4
	Emily	
	Katrina	5
	Rita	
	Wilma	5
2007	Dean	
	Felix	
2008	Ike	4
2009	Bill	
2010	Danielle	
2011	Katia	

Table 5.1 Hurricanes in the Caribbean

BOX 5.4

Depressions, storms and hurricanes

Extremely high sea surface temperatures in the Atlantic from June to November generate localised areas of low atmospheric pressure where warm, moist oceanic air rises and cools, producing heavy convectional rains. These give rise to several different levels of atmospheric disturbance:

- An *easterly wave* or *tropical wave* is merely an area of unstable weather that dissipates over one or two days. It brings a slight lowering of pressure, an increase in wind strength of perhaps a few knots and cloudy and rainy weather.
- A *tropical depression* results if the easterly wave forms a system – the isobar pattern becomes closed – and pressures are lower than normal in the centre of the system. Winds begin to strengthen as they blow from high-pressure areas outside the system into the lower pressures inside the system. Winds may increase to about 20–34 knots (23–39 mph) and cloudy and rainy conditions are experienced. Again, conditions may dissipate over one or two days. At this point the National Hurricane Center in Miami gives the system a number.
- A *tropical storm* forms once the winds increase to 35–64 knots (39–74 mph). This means that the air pressure is continuing to decrease, generating stronger winds. Shown on a weather map, the isobars are drawn closer together, indicating steep pressure gradients and an increasingly organised system around a central area of low pressure. At this point the authorities issue a name for the storm. Such storms are likely to bring limited damage to buildings; for example, roofs may blow off and power and telephone lines may be brought down by falling trees. There is the likelihood of floods. The storm may develop rather quickly (and unpredictably) into a hurricane, so it is intensively studied and tracked by the hurricane centre.
- A *hurricane* or *tropical cyclone* develops when a tropical storm becomes so unstable that the warm air within rises to great heights in the atmosphere. It then derives a spin from the Coriolis Force and becomes a whirling system of winds spiralling in, maintained by the supply of warm, moist air from the waters below. Pressures drop to 880 mb and lower. Powerful winds (in excess of 74 mph or 65 knots) now

blow inwards and around a central 'eye' or area of calm. The hurricane becomes an environmental disaster when lives, livelihoods and property are lost through strong winds, heavy rainfall and floods. In addition, a **storm surge** is created as the hurricane makes landfall, intensifying the danger for coastal lowlands.

A **storm surge** occurs when a high dome of water forms due to a combination of high winds and high tides.

The Coriolis Force is not felt strongly at the Equator and so hurricanes do not form or travel routes that are close to the Equator. Guyana and Trinidad, then, are at a low risk for hurricanes. However, in 2004 Hurricane Ivan devastated Grenada and affected Tobago, showing that they can sometimes follow routes that are very southerly. At such times Trinidad usually feels the effects of the outer bands.



Fig. 5.11 Hurricane Ivan

Forecasting the route a hurricane will take is now an extremely specialised skill and it can help significantly in reducing the dangers posed to people and property. Accurate forecasts serve as the basis for evacuating people from risky environments. However, hurricanes are erratic and there may only be a 12-hour period before it is certain that a hurricane will come ashore at a certain place. Generally, forecasts help to forewarn and prepare people to batten down and safeguard their property as best they can and to stock up on essential supplies to ease the chaos in the aftermath of a hurricane.

Hurricanes become disasters when they exact a heavy toll on the people who live in these risky environments. It is thus in the interests of Caribbean people to be proactive about putting in place strategies that may help to mitigate the effects of a hurricane rather than just hoping for the best.

5.1.5 Disaster Mitigation

Mitigation is a term used to describe strategies undertaken to prevent or reduce death, damage or hardship, either for a hazard that has already occurred or for one that is likely to occur in the future. The focus of mitigation is to reduce risk and even modify the hazard where possible. Mitigation occurs at different levels and different time frames. Individuals, communities and national groups have different and complementary roles to play. Coastal populations have grown over the past two decades and tall buildings have been constructed on newly reclaimed lands. The majority of the population now lives on the most hazard-prone areas at risk of storm surges, tsunamis, hurricanes and earthquakes.

- Individuals can institute their own long-term mitigation strategies (buying insurance, structural reinforcement of roofs and walls, making plans for evacuation, stocking supplies and charting emergency escape routes).
- Communities can organise the safest shelters possible in the local area. They can mobilise trained individuals to check on the elderly, the handicapped and others who may be at risk for different reasons. They can inform national bodies about areas likely to flood and the best evacuation routes and promote a sense of awareness in the persons in the community about what options they have in the event of a disaster.
- There are national emergency management disaster organisations in virtually all Caribbean countries, but their level of efficiency varies. One of the most important mitigation strategies that they undertake is public awareness campaigns to enable people to know how they can best prepare their homes for an emergency such as a hurricane, and how they

can ensure their health and safety during and after a disaster. Unfortunately, there is very little liaison with urban planning departments, land use development projects and the like, which are all involved in mitigation. Most organisations of this kind remain at the level of managing a disaster.

Comprehensive mitigation is organised into phases:

1. **Pre-disaster.** A proactive outlook that seeks to minimise the country's vulnerability by examining land use planning, implementation of building codes, dredging rivers, building dams and ensuring that the greatest concentrations of people are in the least risky areas.
2. **During the disaster.** Communication networks are kept open via amateur radio operators and other mechanisms; search and rescue teams are mobilised; emergency shelters are provided with food, supplies and medical assistance. International relief assistance may be needed.
3. **Post-disaster.** This too can be divided into phases. Relief assistance must continue to provide basic needs even as the reconstruction phase begins. Restoration of water, power and gas is a priority. Clean-up measures give a sense of returning normalcy. Property must be protected from looters and criminal elements. People are given building supplies to use in self-help projects, a strategy that helps in reducing the trauma of dislocation and begins the process of getting busy rebuilding their lives.
4. **Disaster preparedness.** It is imperative that each Caribbean country today has a well thought-out national disaster preparedness plan. Such a plan depends on effective coordination between various community, district and national groups. This is perhaps the most difficult hurdle that such a plan has to overcome. Usually it is well-meaning amateurs who first agitate for disaster preparedness – people who have an interest in the environment, those who are concerned about the effects of a disaster on the poor and squatter communities. It is unfortunate, but it is usually a looming crisis that will finally attract the attention of national bodies and make them see the need for a plan of action. Even when a plan is put in place, it does not necessarily mean that the general population is any more aware of what they should be doing to avert a disaster. For example, many persons may not exert themselves to find out where their nearest hurricane shelter is or even put up in their homes the telephone numbers of emergency relief organisations. Any plan, then, must take into account ways of dealing with the mindset of people, especially when changes in habits and behaviour are involved.

Disaster preparedness is much more of a human issue than it is an environmental one.

ACTIVITY 5.4

1. Brainstorm the range of strategies and measures that you and your family can put in place to mitigate the effects of a hurricane.
2. Suggest difficulties that any ONE group of people may face in putting these measures into effect.
3. Conduct independent research to determine the reasons why Hurricane Katrina was so devastating in its effects on New Orleans in August 2005.
4. In preparing a national disaster preparedness plan for hurricanes or flooding in your country, suggest what might be the 'sticking points' in the development of such a plan?

Hurricanes and tropical storms are the usual disasters that afflict the Caribbean, but the region is also at risk from environmental hazards of geologic origin, such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. Both can occur suddenly, causing widespread death and destruction. The response of Caribbean people to these environmental threats has been on the whole to remain hopeful. Indeed, powerful earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are sporadic occurrences; there are sometimes centuries-long intervals between destructive episodes. Nevertheless, the possibility of disaster is ever present as volcanic activity and earthquakes are difficult to predict accurately; to ignore the threat is to be deliberately careless about our own lives and livelihoods.

5.2

The Environment

5.2.1 The Environment and the People

As well as the more obvious disaster impacts on our societies, we have to consider the impact of a variety of environmental problems, such as soil erosion and degradation; droughts and their antithesis, floods; and the need to protect coastal environments such as wetlands and coral reefs. The study of geography opens up the debate about whether the environment determines how a society and its culture develops, whether it is the society and culture which impacts the environment, or whether the two – people and the environment – are bound together in a dynamic relationship which 'produces' or 'creates' the environment. Each view has implications

for how space or place, and thus society and culture, are portrayed. Traditional geography teaching, especially physical geography, tends to emphasise the dominant role that landscape plays in influencing society and culture. The settlement patterns in the Lesser Antilles, for example, show relatively dense settlement on the drier west coasts, where the main towns are also found, because the north-east trades bring heavy relief rainfall to the east coasts, which are also the first places where hurricanes make landfall. Fig. 5.12 on page 120 shows how the landscape influences decisions people make about where to settle. Human and cultural geography, on the other hand, stress an opposite view, showing that human beings impact and shape the landscape through technology and scientific breakthroughs, whereby people have been able to adapt different environments for human habitation and sustenance.

Postmodern thinking

Recently, a **postmodern** perspective has developed

Postmodernism is a way of thinking that asks us to deconstruct traditional explanations and look for more authentic descriptions of what really happens.

which goes beyond this simple polarity of people and environment as determinants of the landscape.

This view suggests that the term 'people' is not a single, neutral category. There are power relations in all societies and cultures that will inevitably affect how each group lays claim to the environment. Aboriginal peoples often create a geography that is very different from, say, that of urbanised Caribbean residents, but the latter tend to be more powerful than other groups in Caribbean society and culture. They comprise, among others, the highly educated, the wealthy and the political elite, and hence their view and influence become dominant in shaping the environment. So, in the Caribbean today we have ever-growing cities and suburban areas, depopulation of the countryside, industrial estates, hotels and marinas – an organisation of space and place stemming from the interests of powerful groups in urban society.

The postmodern outlook emphasises that the traditional category of 'environment' is also not a single, fixed entity in a primordial state of being 'untouched'. What is regarded as 'the environment' is constantly changing based on historical interactions between human beings and the space where they live. Thus, the environment right now, for you, may be a townscape, a built environment. This environment (although built by people in the past) constrains the present inhabitants and their possibilities for development.

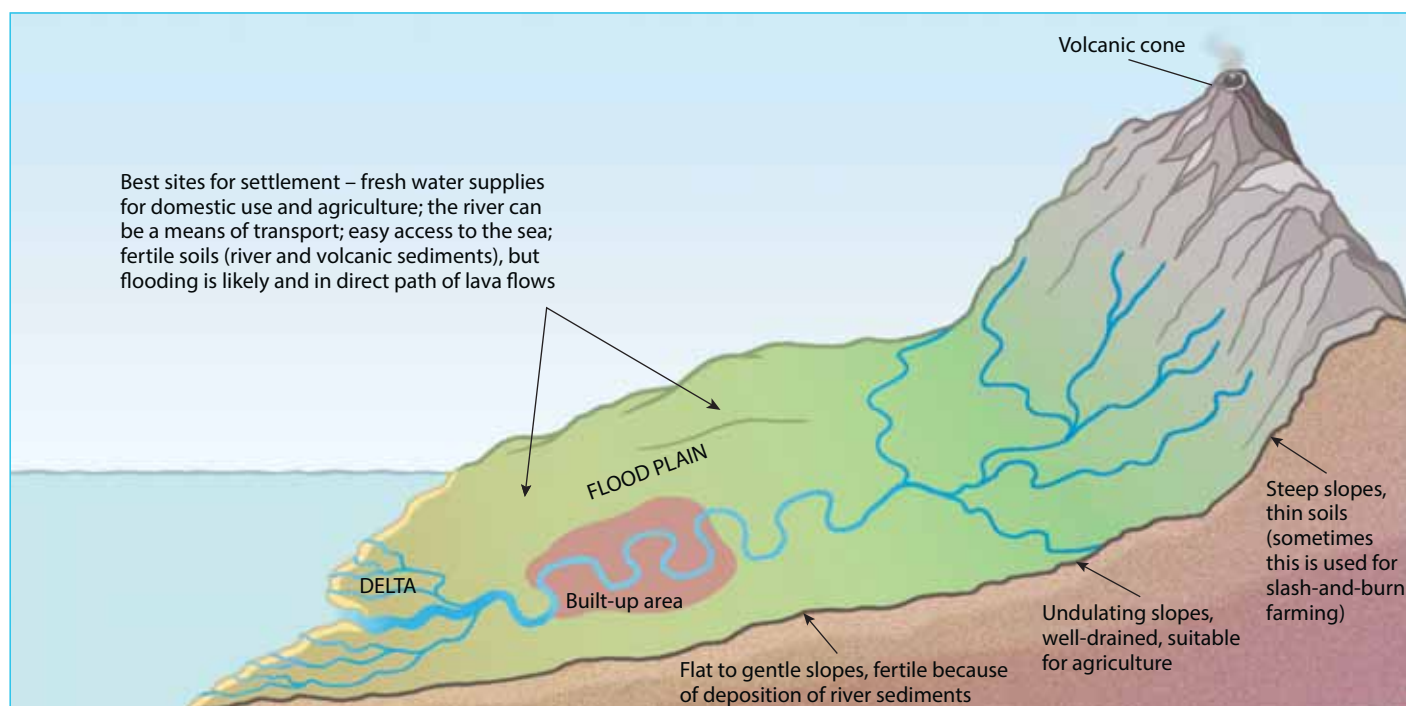


Fig. 5.12 Environmental determinants of settlement

- The colonial tendency to build ports as capital cities in the Caribbean islands, to facilitate exports to the metropole, has for a long time been constraining national development because the capital has become a *primate city* – an over-large urban area with a disproportionate level of goods and services. The capital city houses the headquarters of all the economic, commercial, financial, political, social and cultural organisations, and people from far-flung areas either journey into the city for work or to go to school or must come to town to transact business. The rest of the country remains poorly served with these goods and services.
- Similarly, how our forebears organised the agricultural environment into large plantations constrains us today as we seek to find more viable livelihoods. For example, the profits to be had from traditional plantation crops such as sugar cane and cocoa have dwindled but poor small farmers cannot buy estates or plantations as they go out of production.

The environment, then, is an arena of contestation – between social groups having different amounts of power. It is therefore a social space that has already been moulded by certain groups for their own purposes. A postmodern outlook is useful in examining the power relations in society and culture to explain how the environment as a social space is perceived.

Perspectives on the Caribbean environment

The colonial experience has left us with a perspective on the land in which human beings dominate and control the environment. This contrasts directly with the perspectives held by the pre-Columbian inhabitants and their descendants today. In certain areas of the world – for example, lands inhabited by Native American Indians, Amerindians and Australian Aborigines – there are places that are considered to be sacred. They are devoted to worship and left virtually untouched. They are associated with stories, myths and legends.

- ◆ Identify at least two websites dedicated to building awareness of indigenous peoples in the Caribbean. Describe how the relationship of these peoples to the natural environment is portrayed.

A different world view altogether came with the Europeans. As conquerors they did not regard the land in the same way as the native peoples did. The advances that the Europeans had made in science and technology enabled them to work wonders in controlling nature to provide more food, better medicines and production tools that made manufacturing more efficient. The idea of the environment as something to be controlled and dominated came with the European and became

entrenched through colonial rule. The early forms of capitalist enterprise – the plantations, the mines and the ranches – organised Caribbean space for economic gain. Land was conceived as merely a backdrop for the activities of powerful social groups. It was the source of raw materials.

ACTIVITY 5.5

1. How did the religion of the aboriginal inhabitants influence their perspectives on the environment?
2. Would you also say that religion was a factor in the perspectives that Europeans held for the environment? Explain your answer.

Perspectives on the environment are directly related to the level of awareness people have of the importance of the Earth to their very existence. This awareness may be at a spiritual and religious level. It can also be at the level of geographical awareness – through an examination of the relationships between human beings and the environment that can lead to sustainable practices benefiting both the environment and human life and livelihood.

SUMMARY

Decisions made by people who first settle an area as to where to build their communities are influenced by the geography of the place – the relief, climate and soil quality, among other aspects. The impact of human beings on those environments is to a large extent related to their world views about the land, about the significance of humankind and progress, and their spiritual beliefs. Thus, aboriginal peoples, the European invaders and today's affluent urban dwellers in the Caribbean all have or have had varying perspectives on how land should be utilised. The societies and cultures developed by different peoples in the Caribbean over time put in train beliefs about land use that supported their world views. The original inhabitants had a strong nurturing relationship with the land (a relationship their descendants still have today); the Europeans favoured a strong exploitative relationship that privileged the primacy of human beings over nature; and today's affluent Caribbean folks tend to regard land as merely a social space for capitalist enterprise. This shows that how landscape is shaped is as much a cultural and social creation as an environmentally determined one.

5.2.2 Environmental Hazards

Environmental hazards have the potential to threaten the natural environment as well as human health and well being. In this section we will try to understand better how, generally through social and cultural practices, Caribbean people actually create risky environments and thereby intensify the nature of environmental disasters. Perspectives on the land become important, because if our relationship to the land is one of protection, then we will be less likely to put it and ourselves at risk.

Environmental degradation

Environmental degradation is a general way of describing the loss of some degree of quality in the air, land or water around us. It describes soil that has lost its fertility, hillsides that are severely gullied, air that is full of emissions from factories, rivers that have a reduced flow because the water is channelled away for human use, and a reduction in the numbers of species of flora and fauna in an area. *Pollution* is a more specific term referring to the ways in which human beings have caused the contamination of the environment through adding substances that harm human, animal and plant life, known as **pollutants** (Fig. 5.13).

Pollutants are substances such as poisonous gases or emissions and effluents released into the air, land and waters around us by vehicle exhausts, factory fumes and industrial, agricultural and household waste, including sewage.

Pollution and other processes of environmental degradation that are caused by human activity tend to disrupt the balance and harmony found in **ecosystems**.

An **ecosystem** is the dynamic and complex interactions between plants, animals and microorganisms and their non-living environment at a particular location.

It is well known, for example, that the increasing population pressure on land in the Caribbean has influenced urban populations to fill in shallow parts of the coasts for much-needed residential areas, including filling in former wetlands (mangroves, marshes and swamps). In so doing they have disrupted the delicate ecological balance of coastal wetlands, destroying the habitats of the flora and fauna of the area and often endangering certain species in the process. Attempts to remedy or reverse the effects of pollution and other forms of environmental degradation and restore the environment as close as possible to its natural state are referred to as *conservation*.

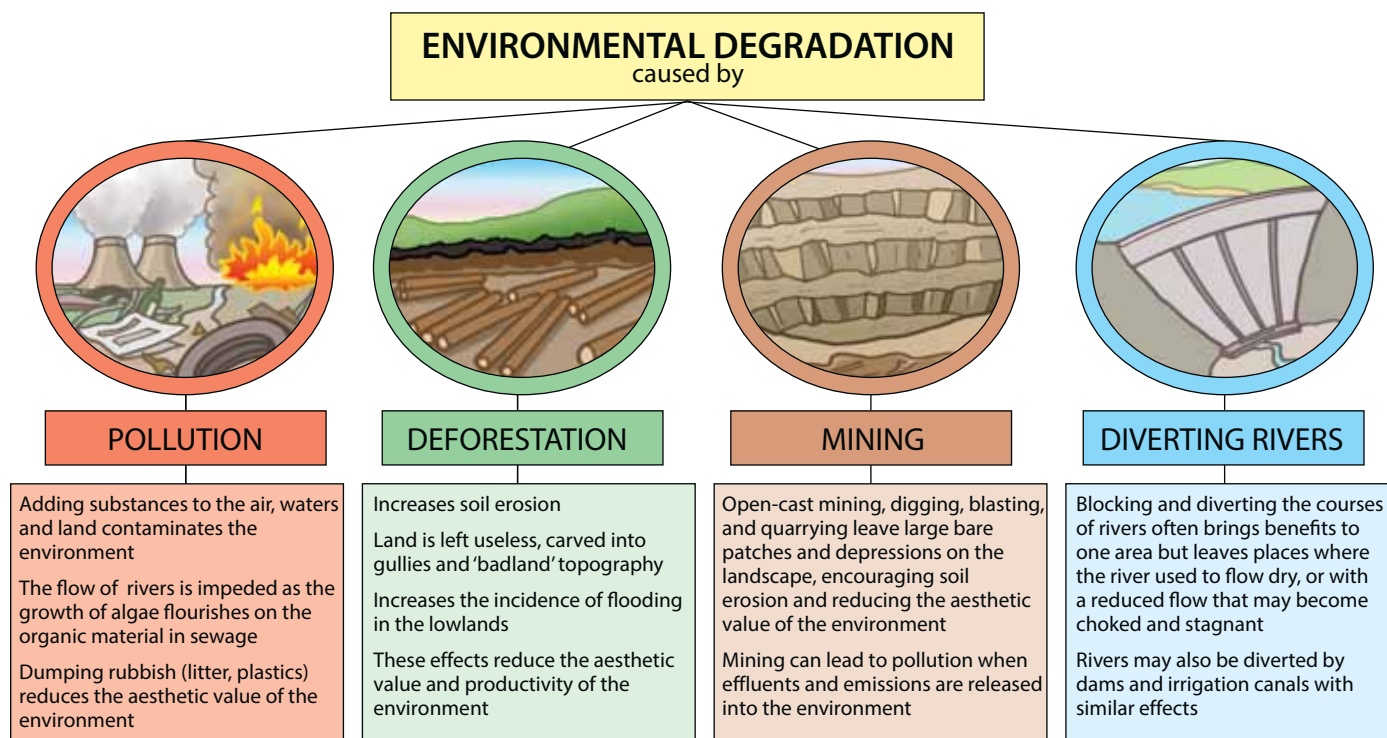


Fig. 5.13 Environmental degradation

Natural processes of environmental change

The environment has always experienced change, even destruction, caused by natural events. These changes are part of the natural cycles of the Earth. For example, over the past million years several separate Ice Ages have come and gone, with ice covering a large percentage of the Earth for thousands of years. The melting of the ice at the end of each of these raised sea levels, drowning many lowland areas. Soils, which take hundreds of years to develop through the gradual erosion of rock formations (see §5.2.3 below), are always being washed away by heavy storms, especially soils on steep slopes. Hurricanes continue to wreak havoc on the landscape. But the likelihood is that in time the natural environment will recover from these events and adjust to new conditions. However, human habitation often aggravates these natural processes of environmental change.

5.2.3 Soil Erosion

Soils are formed by the breakdown of rocks over hundreds of years. The rocks break down into their constituent minerals forming the inorganic (the physical medium) basis of a soil. This material combines with vegetation such as roots and leaves, as well as with water and air, to

form the biochemical entity known as 'soil'. Earthworms and other soil organisms bore passages through the soil, allowing air to circulate, and grind up the soil into finer particles. It is quite complex and fragile and much more than just the sum of its parts. For example, **humus** is a

Humus is formed by the decomposition of animal and vegetable matter through the action of bacteria.

vital component of any soil because it helps to maintain good soil structure and has the capacity to retain and exchange nutrients. It thus plays a major part in all the soil processes (especially chemical reactions) that maintain the fertility of a soil.

The removal of soil by wind, water or moving ice is known as *soil erosion*. It is a natural process but human activity has made it easier for larger amounts of soil to be removed in a shorter period of time, known as 'accelerated soil erosion'. Once removed, soil is not likely to be recovered and reused. Nevertheless, it is not as dramatic or sudden as other disasters (such as hurricanes or earthquakes) and the loss of soil may go undetected for long periods of time. Soil erosion is described as a 'creeping' hazard and an example of environmental degradation that may lead eventually to an environmental disaster (as in Haiti, see Box 5.5).

BOX 5.5

Case study: Soil erosion in Haiti

The island of Hispaniola is one of the most mountainous in the Caribbean. The central mountains contain the highest peak in the region, Pico Duarte, in the Dominican Republic (Fig. 5.14). The physical landscape consists mainly of mountains, plateaux and hilly terrain, with the minimum of flat land. In fact, it is estimated that only 20 per cent of Haiti is considered suitable for arable land use – a major area being the Artibonite Valley – but 50 per cent is actually under cultivation. The environmental problems flow mainly from this fact, that the land is overcultivated.

Soil erosion is so severe in Haiti that it is an ecological disaster. A small elite owns the most productive lands and the majority are poor subsistence farmers who cultivate steeply sloping lands of only marginal fertility to provide for their families. Although Haiti took the dramatic step in 1791 of overthrowing the French as colonial rulers, the local dictators and heads of state since then have done little to redress a situation where the poor continue to eke out a miserable existence.

The soil erosion problem that results from farming on steep slopes is compounded by the fact that firewood (from trees) is the major source of

fuel in Haiti – in both rural and urban areas. Vast areas of the country have been deforested to supply its energy needs. Gullies and bare rock surfaces are evidence of the environmental degradation that has resulted.

Inevitably, Haiti's poverty, of both urban and rural dwellers, has a severe impact on the environment. When daily survival is of paramount importance, the controls and careful husbandry that are necessary to protect the environment fall by the wayside. There have been many attempts by international agencies to implement soil conservation schemes but they have failed largely because they relied on the government to force farmers to adopt the techniques, with few apparent rewards. Today there is a concerted effort to expand **agroforestry** as a conservation technique, using grassroots meetings and community groups that also discuss issues dealing with poverty, health and women's rights. Thus, soil erosion is now on the agenda as a sociopolitical issue.

Agroforestry is a type of forestry that treats forests as sustainable agricultural areas growing saleable products, namely timber goods.

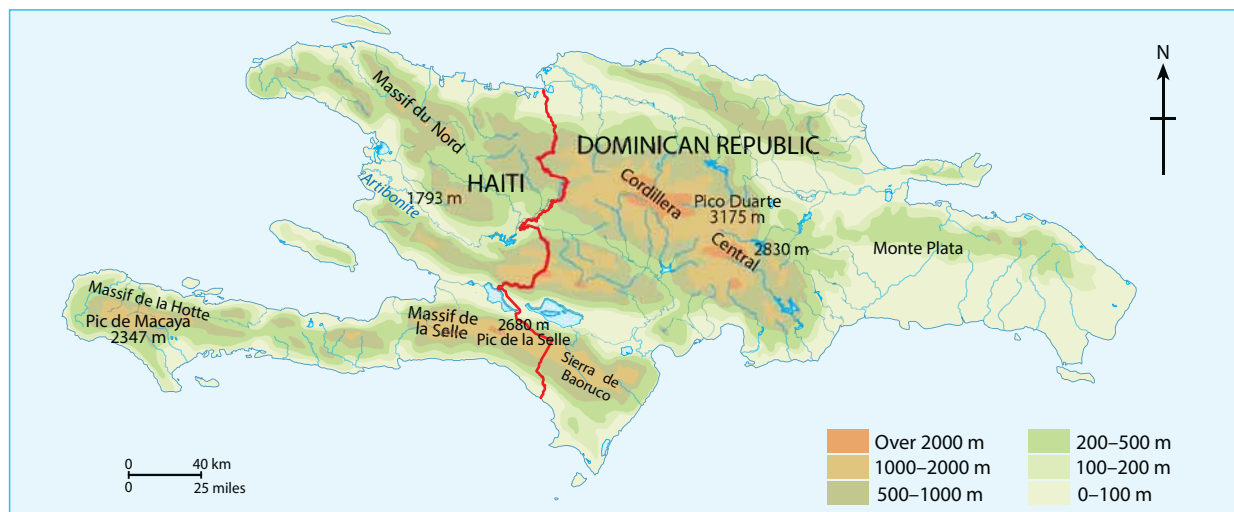


Fig. 5.14 Hispaniola: physical features

Social and cultural practices that accelerate soil erosion

Deforestation

The roots of plants and trees hold the soil together. The leaves and branches intercept rainfall, slowing down the

impact of raindrops on the soil below, thus reducing the chances of loosening and displacing soil particles. When the vegetation is removed, the soil is left bare and can be blown or washed away. Deforestation occurs as a result of various activities.

- Slash and burn is a widespread practice to remove undergrowth. Burning helps to increase fertility because the ash is rich in minerals, but leaving the land without vegetation cover for even short periods encourages soil erosion.
- Overgrazing is likely to occur when the number of animals on a piece of land exceeds its 'carrying capacity'; the likelihood is that the animals will remove all the vegetation, leaving the soil bare. The carrying capacity of a plot of land refers to a maximum number of animals that can graze without leaving the land bare.
- Bulldozing hillsides and clearing lands for housing developments, roads, quarries and mines, and for urban development projects – malls, shopping plazas, commercial complexes and industrial parks – leaves land unprotected while construction is in progress.
- The making of charcoal is a common practice where fuel is expensive; people have long relied on trees and woody shrubs for firewood as a household and industrial fuel. This is the case over large expanses of Haiti (Box 5.5), where the wood is burnt in a special way to convert it to charcoal.

Farming practices

- Shifting cultivation is a traditional practice of small farmers all over the Caribbean. Plots are cleared and cultivated for a few years and then left in fallow (under grass to recover fertility) while another plot is cleared for use. Now that populations have grown, the land is in continuous use so that there is little time for recovery and the soil fertility deteriorates.
- Ploughing up and down a hillside helps to form natural grooves which channel water (carrying soil) from the top of the hill downwards.
- Planting in neat, straight rows leaves exposed soil in between the rows as well as an uninterrupted path for the wind to blow the soil away during periods of drought.

The effects of deforestation and farming practices are intensified by climatic conditions. Convectional rainfall, occurring just after the noonday heat in the Caribbean, is usually a short episode of torrential rain. The raindrops in a thunderstorm are large (compared to drizzle) and they hit the soil with great impact. This is called 'raindrop splash' and increases the chances of soils being eroded from deforested areas.

Effects of soil erosion

The effects of soil erosion are numerous and widespread:

- With the removal of the nutrient-rich topsoil, the immature soils below cannot sustain crop production at similar levels. The productivity of land thus decreases as yields decrease.

- Some land may go out of use entirely and become covered in secondary vegetation (scrub, bush) or carved into gullies and deep ravines.
- Flooding in lowland areas occurs when soil is removed from the hillside and accumulates on the beds of rivers, thus building up the beds and reducing the capacity of rivers. In times of heavy rainfall, the rivers cannot hold as much water as before and flooding results. This may occur over wide areas that may be far from the original sites of soil erosion (Fig. 5.15).
- There tends to be a close relationship between environmental degradation and hazards. For example, during hurricanes, or even earthquakes, eroded hillsides are more prone to landslides and mudslides, causing destruction to human lives and property.

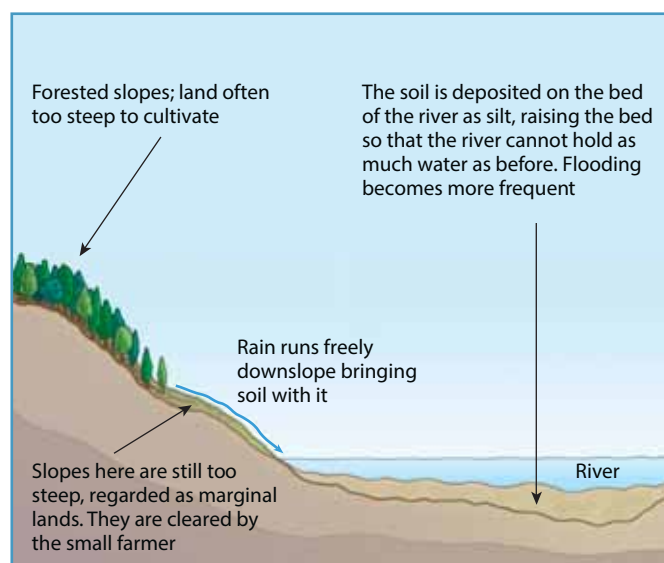


Fig. 5.15 Soil erosion and flooding

Soil conservation

Conservation is designed to prevent environmental degradation or restore lands that have been degraded. The following measures are useful to address the specific problem of soil erosion.

Afforestation

Deep-rooted trees and other types of vegetation are planted in areas where the vegetation was removed and topsoil is brought in from outside. Fast-growing trees are desirable rather than the original cover, which might take too long to reach maturity. The aim is to produce a dense network of roots to bind the soil together and produce a substantial amount of organic material to help in the production of more soil. The effectiveness of the plant cover in reducing soil erosion depends on its type, extent

and quantity. Forests and grasses which completely cover the soil, and which intercept all falling raindrops at and close to the surface, are efficient in controlling soil loss.

Landscaping

Sometimes an eroded hillside is carved into deep gullies and ravines so that the whole area has to be bulldozed and sculpted into an undulating landscape before afforestation.

Agricultural practices

There are a number of agricultural practices which can help to conserve the soil and keep it in good condition:

- **Contour ploughing.** Tilling land around the hill slopes along the height contours breaks up the natural channels and grooves in the soil which may channel water directly downslope.



Fig. 5.16 Cultivated hills near Constance, Armando, Bermuez National Park, Dominican Republic

- **Planting shelter belts.** To break the force of the wind, lines of trees are planted at intervals along flat expanses of land where the speed of the wind may otherwise take up loose soil particles.
- **Intercropping/strip cropping.** Clean, neat rows between crops are avoided when different crops are cultivated together, at different angles to each other.
- **Agroforestry.** Crops such as cocoa, coffee, fruit trees and bananas can be grown in the forest, coexisting with the trees and other vegetation.
- **Crop rotation.** Each crop depletes the soil of certain minerals so if different crops are planted in succession, rather than the same crop continuously, the depleted nutrients will regenerate naturally.



Fig. 5.17 Terracing in Haiti

- **Terraces.** Building small walls, ridges and channels around sloping land helps to prevent rainfall from running freely downslope and reduces the chances of soil being removed.
- **Stubble mulching.** Leaving stubble or residues after harvesting on the field as long as possible helps to reduce evaporation and keeps the soil covered.

ACTIVITY 5.6

1. Identify the causes of soil erosion for any one area in your country.
2. What conservation measures, if any, are being employed?

Soil erosion and poverty

While soil erosion is a natural phenomenon, accelerated soil erosion on the scale that is being experienced in Caribbean countries today is a social and cultural phenomenon. Box 5.5 described the horrific state of soil erosion in Haiti and also the relationship of soil erosion to poverty. Countries that are very poor (and poorer groups in a seemingly affluent country) are driven by the need to survive and fulfil their basic needs. Preserving the environment is a long-term goal to which they cannot commit because they are more concerned with short-term survival. Deforestation, especially where the purpose is to gather fuel, and farming lands of only marginal fertility put the environment at risk, but such practices also represent a means of making a livelihood to people with few options.

The reduction in yields that these people experience and the resultant flooding that affects those farmers on the lowlands are too often ignored as issues of national importance. They are seen as the plight of poor people. Thus, soil erosion is an environmental problem that is exacerbated by poverty, but because the poor do not have much power in the society, soil conservation does not have a high profile. Affluent groups, too, contribute to soil erosion as owners and investors in large-scale construction projects, timber industries and tourist development sites which require the removal of vegetation over large areas. Although these people are the powerful groups in the society, soil erosion is still not seen as an issue because these ventures are not based on farming.

ACTIVITY 5.7

1. Suggest how the alleviation of poverty can lead to conservation of the environment.
2. How can wealthy and elite groups also be involved in conservation efforts?

Suggestions that are sometimes offered to combat soil erosion go far beyond the conservation measures listed above. They address the basic problem of how the society and culture is organised. Population control, productive employment, meeting basic needs for health care, housing and food, as well as a better income distribution, may well be the fundamental solutions to the problem of soil erosion and environmental degradation.

5.2.4 Destruction of Coral Reefs

Until recently the major hazards faced by coral reefs were hurricanes, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, or in the longer term an Ice Age. Today, however, human beings pose a major threat to coral reefs, as their activities can kill the reefs and cause environmental degradation. Since the 1950s population growth has occurred on such an unprecedented scale in the tropical and subtropical latitudes such as the Caribbean where coral reefs are located (Fig. 5.18), that there has been massive reef destruction

in certain areas. This is paradoxical, because coral reefs provide conditions on which social and cultural life depends in many coastal communities. The threats faced by coral reefs are considered further below.

What are coral reefs?

Coral reefs are living communities. Coral polyps, tiny marine creatures, secrete a calcium carbonate (limestone) shell around their bodies, which remains when they die. The long, tubular shells become cemented together to form the physical structure of the reef, on top of which the live coral polyps grow. The reef structure is a complex physical haven where many kinds of flora and fauna find a refuge. The presence of so many organisms means that it is rich in food supply for other marine creatures.

Coral reefs in the Caribbean

There are many coral reefs in the Caribbean (Fig. 5.18).

- Off Belize is the second-largest barrier reef in the world, stretching for some 320 km (200 miles). The reef is separated from land by a lagoon that is 16–30 km (10–20 miles) wide (Fig. 5.19). On the landward side of the reef the lagoon is quite shallow. On the seaward edge, the reef drops suddenly, plunging thousands of metres to the ocean floor and forming massive coral canyons. Another long barrier reef, almost 200 km (120 miles) long, is located east of the island of Andros in the Bahamas. The longest barrier reef in the world (the Great Barrier Reef) is found off the east coast of Australia, stretching for over 1900 km (1200 miles).



Fig. 5.18 The location of coral reefs in the Caribbean



Fig. 5.19 The barrier reef off Belize

- Fringing reefs are more common in the Caribbean and occur around or partially around most of the islands. Buccoo Reef off Tobago is one example (Fig. 5.20). These reefs are built by corals growing on shallow rocks near the shore and extend gradually seawards. Waves break on the reef, ensuring that a calm lagoon or stretch of sea occurs between the reef and the coastline.
- Coral atolls are rare in the Caribbean. These are coral islands, oval or almost circular, built around a central lagoon. They were formed by the growth of corals on top of sinking volcanoes, the lagoon marking the site of the ancient crater. Some are found in the hundreds of islands forming the barrier reef off Belize.

Growth of coral reefs

Between latitudes 30°N and 30°S, conditions are optimum for the growth of coral. Salty and shallow water around 68°F (20°C), which is clear of sediment, provides the best conditions. The shallow environment allows

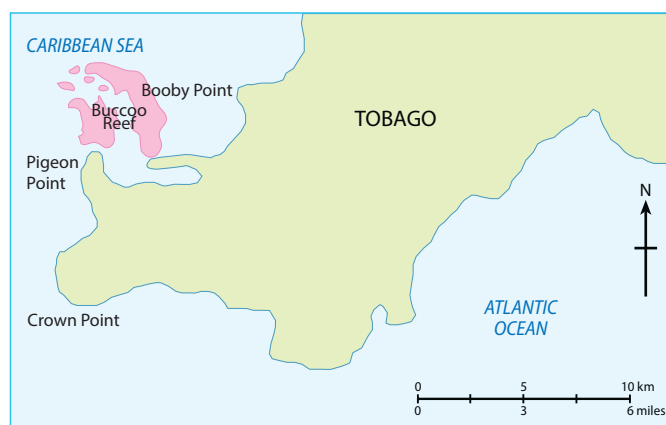


Fig. 5.20 Buccoo Reef off Tobago

sunshine to penetrate freely. Inside each coral polyp grow algae, which produce food and oxygen for the polyp. The algae are protected by being inside the polyp, and feed off nutrients in the coral's waste products. This *symbiotic relationship* (meaning that they are of mutual help to each other) is similar to many kinds of 'living arrangements' found on the reef between the different types of flora and fauna that have to cohabit and coexist within the reef. Any turbidity in the water reduces the efficiency with which these processes take place and also reduces the amount of sunlight that can penetrate to the coral. Thus, corals will not be found where major rivers bringing a large sediment load reach the sea. The coastal waters of Guyana, for example, where the Essequibo, Demerara, Berbice and Corentyne rivers bring down sediment, silt and nutrients from the interior, do not offer favourable conditions for the growth of coral.

Biodiversity

In addition to the many different types of coral found on reefs (hard coral, black coral, sea plumes, stony corals, soft corals and fans), there are thousands of species of marine flora and fauna. There are fish species of all sizes, sponges, molluscs, oysters, crabs, lobsters, shrimps, sea worms, eels, octopuses, sea urchins, clams, jellyfish, sea anemones, turtles and a host of others. The protection offered by the reef structures to plant and animal life encourages great **biodiversity** and some species are

Biodiversity refers to the presence of many different species in an area or region.

millions of years old. Some of these species are found nowhere else in the world, and others are rare.

Coral reefs are therefore ecosystems that support an immense variety of life and also have great potential

to produce new medicines for humankind. The relatively new drug for the treatment of AIDS – AZT – was developed from chemicals in a sponge found on Caribbean reefs. There is ongoing research into producing sunscreen derived from chemicals found in corals and into synthesising a bone-building substance for injuries involving broken bones.

Tourism

The reef provides a wonder world of colours, shapes and sizes, in addition to the immense variety of marine fauna and flora (Fig. 5.21). The Belize Barrier Reef has been designated one of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites. In addition to travelling out to observe the reefs through glass-bottomed boats, tourists can snorkel or go scuba diving or fishing. These are becoming increasingly popular pursuits as tourists now have developed tastes for adventure tourism and ecotourism. The typical white sandy beaches that traditionally lured the tourists are formed by waves smashing coral fragments to powder. The coral reef, then, is an important part of the 'Caribbean package' in which the tourist is interested, and thus contributes a great deal towards the income from tourism – easily the highest income-generating activity for many Caribbean countries today.

Fisheries

Since the reefs are a haven for all kinds of life, they provide valuable fisheries. For hundreds of years Caribbean

fishermen have been depending on the reefs to sustain the livelihoods of many coastal villages. Seafood provided an important source of protein and the basis of a healthy lifestyle. The fishermen were aware of the part that nearby mangroves and sea grass beds played as a nursery for fish. The fish were spawned in these environments, where they spent some time, but sooner or later they made for the coral reef structures, which offered better protection from predators. Caribbean fishermen, with their traditional practices, did not disturb the valuable connections between sea grass beds, mangroves and coral reefs. Social and cultural life in these coastal villages depended on the local knowledge fishermen had about coral reefs and their ecological connections. They carried out *sustainable fishing* practices. Modern fishing techniques fit with a more industrial scale of marine exploitation, and result in much higher catches – for a time. Eventually, however, fish stocks decline, and we face the problem of *overfishing*, which has affected fishing industries the world over.

The Caribbean fishing industry provides a livelihood for about 182 000 people, many of them carrying out traditional fishing in rural areas. The total number of fishing boats in use is estimated at more than 13 000. Fish is also an important source of daily nutrition, and in the Caribbean consumption is high. Table 5.2 shows the importance of the fishing industry across the region in the first decade of this century, in terms of exports and GDP, as well as local consumption estimates.



Fig. 5.21 Some flora and fauna of the coral reef

Table 5.2 **Fishing in the Caribbean, various years (2006 unless stated)**

Country	Contribution of fisheries to GDP (%)	Number of fishers	Total number of fishing boats	Fisheries production 2008 (000kg)	Fish export 2008 (000kg)	Total human consumption (tonne)	Per capita consumption
Antigua and Barbuda	1.70 (2003)	1088 (2004)	728 (2004)	3521.0	37.7	3530 (2003)	48.3 (2003)
Barbados	0.90 (1990)	2200 (2000?)	955 (NF50 2002)	2711.5	168.0	11 090 (2003)	41.1 (2003)
Belize	3.00 (2006)	3000 –4000 (2002?)	552 (NF50 2002?)	4150.0	0	3625 (2003)	14.2 (2003)
Dominica	2.00 (1994)	2338	1100 (NF50 2000)	no data	1.4	1596.8 (2000)	20.24 (2003)
Grenada	2.10 (1994)	1240(-)	n/a	2378.5	537.5	4172 (2003?)	52.2 (2003?)
Guyana	6.63 (2002)	5644 (2002?)	>1300 (2004)	61 000.0	61 000.0	34 642 (2003)	45.7 (2003)
Haiti	no data	50 000	no data	no data	no data	21 342 (2003)	2.6 (2003)
Jamaica	0.41 (2001)	15 336 (2004)	4274 (2004)	15 825.0	448.5	49 465 (2003)	18.7 (2003)
St Kitts and Nevis	0.45 (1994)	650	n/a	363.1	101.2	1495 (2003)	35.6 (2003)
St Lucia	0.75	2059	690 – most motorised (NF50 2006)	1510.2	0	4753 (2003)	31. (2003)
St Vincent and the Grenadines	0.90	2500	600 – most motorised (NF50 1999)	794.5	0	1711 (1999)	15.1 (1999)
Suriname	0.75	5169	1150 (NF50 2006)	24 062.7	20 877.0	7124 (2003)	16.3 (2003)
Trinidad and Tobago	0.09	5100	2184 (NF50 2003)	14 471.1	229.0	18 257	14
Sources	CRFM	CRFM Unless stated	CRFM Unless stated	LMDC	LMDC	NF50	NF50

Source: CRFM: Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism; NF50: National Fishery Sector Review, FAO; LMDC: Landell Mills Development Consultants, 2011 <http://www.agricarib.org/primary-dropdown/fisheries>, accessed 28 March 2014

Coastal protection

The fringing reefs found throughout the Caribbean play an important role in protecting the coasts from erosion. The reefs break the force of the waves, thereby providing an expanse of calm waters between the reefs and the coast. This enables ports, harbours and settlements to enjoy sheltered locations on a calm sea. It also facilitates

fishing and tourist activities such as beach and sea sports. Mangrove and other wetlands thrive as they are dependent on the accumulation and deposition of silt, which is more likely to occur under calm conditions. Caribbean society and culture, then, have been shaped in many ways by proximity to the coast, especially to coral reefs, where seafood is plentiful and coastal protection is given.

Threats to coral reefs

Natural threats

- The **ENSO event** of 1997–1998 generated higher

ENSO stands for El Niño Southern Oscillation, an unpredictable climatic system in the Pacific Ocean which impacts on global climate and particularly on sea temperatures.

than normal sea surface temperatures and this led to the bleaching of corals in the Caribbean and elsewhere. Bleaching occurs when the warm temperatures kill the algae living in the coral polyp, causing the polyp itself to weaken, whiten and die. There was extensive damage done to certain species of coral (namely the elkhorn coral) on the Belize reef and elsewhere in the Caribbean. An earlier ENSO episode occurred in 1982–1983, with similar effects. You will learn more about the ENSO later in this chapter.

- Scientists today seem more committed to the idea of the phenomenon known as global warming than a few years ago, though there are still some who maintain that the problem does not exist and any warming detected is due to the natural variability of the climate. Global warming, in the long term, will result in higher sea surface temperatures and the likelihood of bleaching. There is the probability, too, that global warming will contribute to the melting of the polar ice caps, causing sea levels to rise and coral reefs to be destroyed if sunlight can no longer reach the reef.
- Sometimes in the dry season Caribbean countries receive large amounts of dust from the Sahara, blown over the Atlantic Ocean. Researchers believe that the increasing incidence of drought and desertification in the Sahel region of Africa will bring more African dust to the Caribbean. The dust brings with it soil fungi that are believed to be detrimental to some reef species such as sea fans.

Human threats

In Caribbean society and culture, small coastal communities have made a livelihood by fishing off the reefs and their impact on the reefs has been negligible (see above). For example, the remoter cays and islands within the barrier reefs off Belize and the Bahamas show healthy corals with an abundance and great variety of flora and fauna. However, there is a direct relationship between the growth of population and an increase in the pace and extent of their economic activities and coral reef degradation. As populations have grown and economies have been expanded, reefs have come increasingly under

threat, thereby threatening the sustainability of the fishing industry. For example:

- Inland activities such as blasting hillsides and deforestation have led to an increase in the sediment load brought down by rivers, increasing the turbidity of coastal waters. The silt smothers the coral, preventing sunlight from reaching the algae within the coral polyp.
- Building of marinas, hotels and urban settlements on the coast disturbs the fragile coastal ecosystems because wetlands and mangrove areas are drained, cleared and filled in, artificial beaches are created and the contours of the coast are changed, often disturbing the ecological connections between fish nurseries and the reefs.
- Harvesting coral for building material physically destroys the reef and reduces the effect of the protection from storms that coral reefs offer.
- Improper sewage treatment for coastal settlements, particularly large hotels, allows raw or partially treated sewage to flow into the sea. This is nutrient-rich and algae grow in abundance, covering the reef and choking corals. Fertilisers in agricultural run-off also provide nutrients, which again lead to the overgrowth of algae.
- Industrial effluents such as mine run-off, and agricultural effluents rich in pesticides and insecticides, prove poisonous to corals and other forms of life on the reef.
- Hot water emissions from power plants lead to bleaching of coral in a manner similar to an ENSO event.
- Overfishing, especially of ‘target fish’, depletes certain species. People tend to develop a taste for certain fish, which then become target fish and are caught in such large numbers that they are endangered. This is also the case for speciality fish for the pet trade, such as aquarium fish. The methods employed, such as trawling using small-sized nets, capture many other types of fish that are merely discarded. These activities threaten the sustainability of the fishing industry. Jamaica’s reefs, especially those to the north of the island, where there is the heaviest tourist presence, have become degraded largely because of overfishing.
- Destructive fishing methods physically destroy the reef and reef species when explosives are used to kill fish. Cyanide is used to poison and stun fish so that they can be captured live – often for the pet trade. It also succeeds in killing the corals and other fish species. Fish traps set for larger fish also kill younger fish and thus endanger the fish supply for the following years.

BOX 5.6

Sustainability and coral reefs in St Lucia

St Lucia has moved swiftly to rehabilitate its coral reefs, which were severely degraded. To do so, compromise and partnerships had to be forged with the very people who had been guilty of destroying the reefs – fishermen, poachers, tourists and divers. It is a continuing struggle, though, to control the behaviours of the owners and operators of factories and hotels and inland developers.

In St Lucia the Soufrière Marine Management Area (SMMA) was formed in 1994, making the fringing reefs of the south into a marine park or reserve. This became necessary because of pollution and overfishing in the area. Sustainability is a complex issue as it involves the livelihoods of people; the environment cannot just be protected from human beings without the latter being given some way of continuing to maintain their standard of living. To establish the marine park SMMA had to enter into delicate negotiations and constant

dialogue with the residents of the area, especially those who were directly affected – dive-shop operators, fishermen, yacht owners, farmers and those offering a range of tourist services. Through an extensive consultative process, workshops, a public awareness campaign and the involvement of business interests, stakeholders were gradually won over to the need for user fees, for controls and monitoring of fish populations and water quality, for rangers to enforce restrictions, for restocking of fish and for the management of land-based sources of pollution. It is an ongoing development which has resulted in an increase in fish and healthy corals.

The model of a marine park has been used by other countries in the Caribbean, namely Bonaire and the Dominican Republic, to preserve the coral reef environment and to sustain the fishing industry by providing a profitable livelihood for those who depend on it.

- Tourism contributes to the physical destruction of the reef when tourists trample on it during sightseeing expeditions. Boats carrying tourists indiscriminately drop anchor, again destroying the reef structure. Where the tourist trade is well developed, local people rob the reef to make jewellery, handicrafts and trinkets from coral. Shells of all kinds, too, are a speciality item.

A study of coral reefs shows us how a resource that has been important in maintaining society and culture in the Caribbean is being progressively destroyed by ‘development’ activities. Although there have been calls for sustainable development, awareness of the problem is still largely confined to a few environmental groups. ‘Sustainable development’ refers to the way a resource is used so that it can continue to provide for human beings from one generation to the next (Box 5.6). It calls for geographic awareness and an attitude of environmental conservation and protection.

5.2.5 Drought and Floods

It is difficult to define **drought** precisely because it depends

A **drought** is a temporary feature of the climate. It is an unusually long period when rainfall is below the ‘normal’ levels for that region, causing the severe depletion of the water available to plants, animals and human beings.

on the climate of a particular place. A month of low rainfall in an equatorial latitude will be considered a drought because the high temperatures maintain high rates of evaporation and transpiration, thus reducing the supply of water. In a semi-arid climate, or one with a pronounced ‘dry’ season, as in the Caribbean, a month of low rainfall would, however, constitute a normal pattern of rainfall. Arid climates (those that are normally dry, like deserts) would also not be said to be experiencing a drought.

Drought as a natural phenomenon

The tropical marine climate experienced in the Caribbean has definite wet and dry seasons. Fig. 5.22 gives a general picture of the annual distribution of rainfall for Belize City

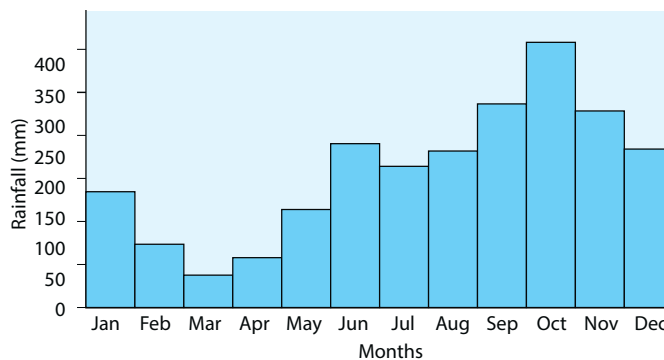


Fig. 5.22 Rainfall, tropical marine climate: Belize City

where average rainfall is 2000 mm (80 inches) a year. Some areas may be drier than normal in the dry season because of local conditions of size, relief and location. Also, naturally occurring dry spells brought on by global changes in weather patterns exacerbate the dry season (see below).

By contrast, Anguilla, located at 18°N latitude, receives only 800 mm (35 inches) of rainfall annually, much of that in October to December. The island is small (about 91 square km or 35 square miles) and because of

its size does not generate much convectional rainfall, though hurricanes and tropical storms periodically bring heavy rainfall. The landscape is also flat and low-lying so that rain generated from relief or orographic effects is negligible. Some of the rainfall is cyclonic in origin, especially in the winter months in the northern hemisphere (see Box 5.7 for more information on rainfall). Anguilla, then, is at risk of drought because it is highly dependent on passing weather systems from North America to bring rainfall.

BOX 5.7

Types of rainfall

When air is forced to rise, the water vapour in it cools, condenses and changes to droplets of water. Clouds are masses of water droplets. When the clouds become saturated and no more water droplets can be held, rain occurs. Thus the trigger action for rain to fall is for the air to rise. The different types of rainfall – convectional, relief and cyclonic – occur because air is forced to rise for different reasons (see Fig 5.23 below).

Cold air usually comes into the Caribbean in the winter months of the northern hemisphere. Cold air flows out of North America bringing cooler temperatures and cyclonic rain (sometimes called frontal rain) to the Greater Antilles, the Bahamas, Anguilla and the northern Leewards. The zone of interaction between the cold and warm air is called a cold front or 'norther'.

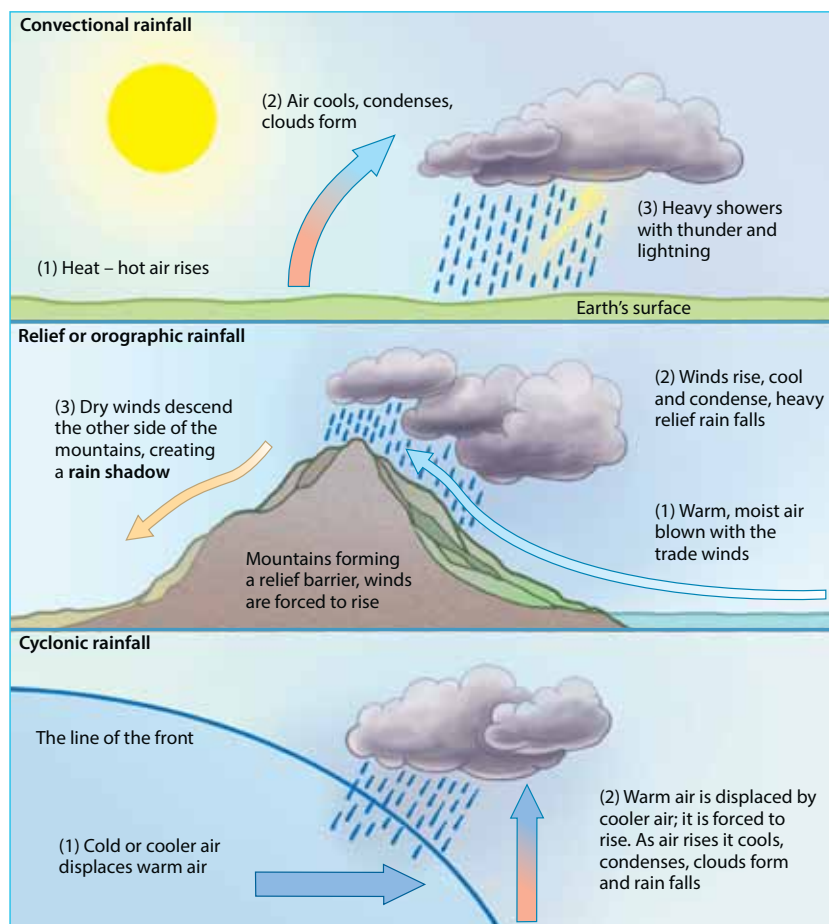


Fig. 5.23 Different types of rainfall

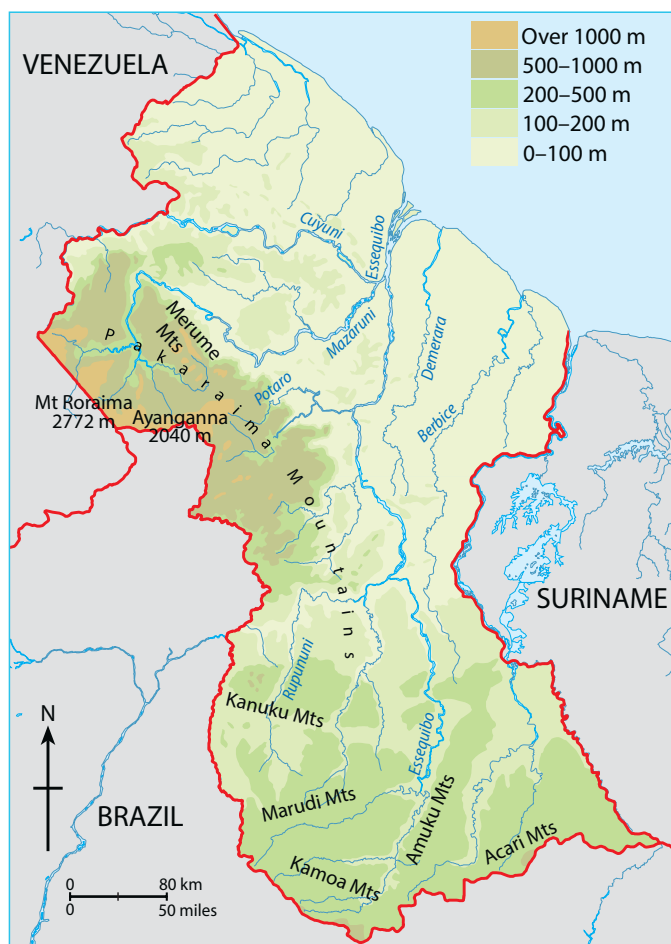


Fig. 5.24 Guyana: physical landscape

A country such as Guyana, on the other hand, located in the equatorial latitudes (stretching from 1°N to 6°N), represents a marked contrast (Fig. 5.24). Rain falls throughout the year, with a definite rainy season from May to July. Coastal areas have a second rainy season from November through to January. The average annual rainfall is 2525 mm (about 100 inches). However, because the country is so large there are regional variations. The Rupununi savannas in the interior, far from the rain-bearing effects of the trade winds, are much drier, and in recent years have suffered from drought. So although Guyana is in the hot and wet equatorial latitudes, it is also at risk of drought in certain areas.

In the Greater and Lesser Antilles, rainfall distribution is determined by size, relief and the orientation of mountains to the prevailing north-east trades. The average rainfall is about 1140 mm (45 inches). But where the winds are forced to rise over mountains, there is extremely heavy relief rainfall. For example, Port Antonio on the north-east coast of Jamaica receives 3082 mm (150 inches) of rain per annum as the moisture-bearing north-east trades rise over the Blue Mountains. The mountains themselves record as much as 5000 mm (nearly 200 inches) of rainfall a year, while in the lee of the mountains, Kingston receives only 813 mm (32 inches) (Fig. 5.25). In the Greater and Lesser Antilles, coastal plains in the south, usually where plantation agriculture takes place, experience a similar rain shadow effect.

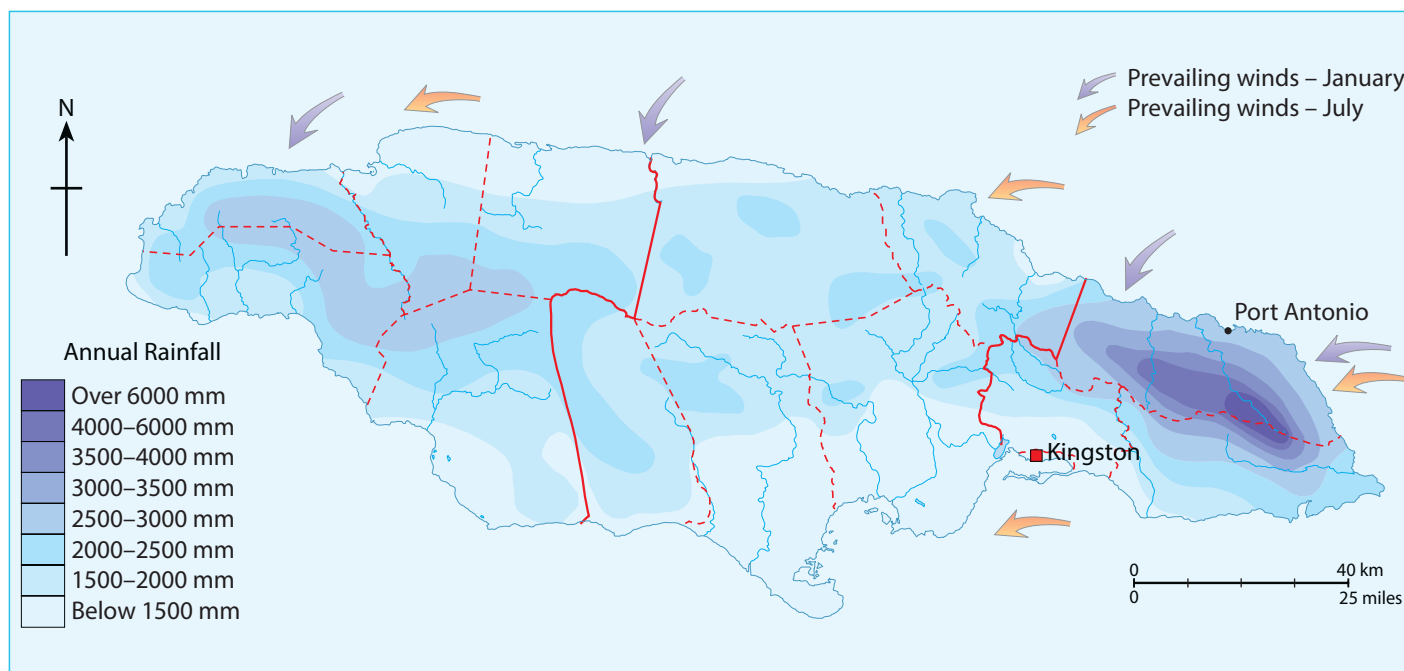


Fig. 5.25 The rain shadow effect in Jamaica

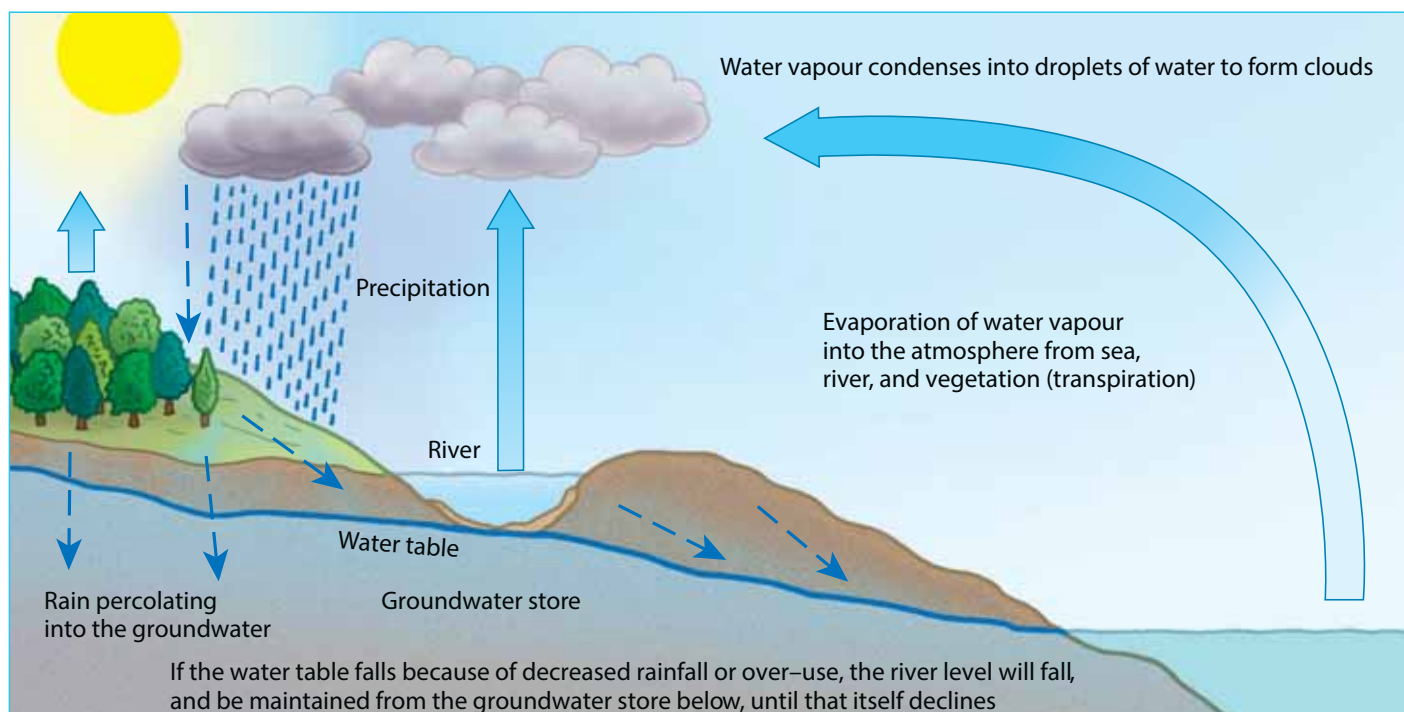


Fig. 5.26 The hydrological cycle

Groundwater store

The dry season, and the even drier conditions brought on by size, relief and location in individual territories, make Caribbean countries susceptible to drought. Fortunately, the physical environment conserves and stores water that can be available for use in the dry season. This is referred to as the groundwater store (Fig. 5.26). Groundwater seeps into and maintains rivers at a certain 'base level' (lower than the levels at the height of a rainy season) and can be tapped by wells. Drought is really pronounced when this store is affected. Like soil erosion, drought is a 'creeping hazard'; its onset may not be detected when rainfall supplies decrease because the groundwater store acts as a 'backup' for a while.

Global changes in weather patterns

Drought in the Caribbean is also linked to global shifts in weather patterns. The El Niño effect is the name given to the periodic upwelling of warm waters off the coast of Peru, displacing the cold currents there, which adversely affects the fishing economy and disrupts local weather patterns. Evidence for El Niño is found in the historical records left by Spanish colonists, as well as in geological evidence. In the past the El Niño effect has been implicated in extreme weather events worldwide, such as floods, hurricanes and droughts. However, researchers say that the El Niño effect is only a local part of a more global shift in the pattern of sea surface temperatures

and atmospheric pressure which occurs over the breadth of the Indian and Pacific Oceans. This increase in sea surface temperatures and the fluctuations in atmospheric pressure over the oceans occur every two to seven years. This combined air and sea anomaly is called the Southern Oscillation. El Niño and the Southern Oscillation (ENSO) together are responsible for the prolonged droughts experienced in the Caribbean, Central America, Venezuela and Brazil, as well as in Africa, Australia and India, in certain years. The ENSO events of 1982–1983 and 1997–1998 were particularly severe. In 1998 Guyana experienced a seven-month drought linked to ENSO (Box 5.8). ENSO events are also believed to be responsible for unusually active hurricane seasons. The ENSO phenomenon is being extensively studied, especially because of its negative impacts on the natural and human environment (Box 5.9).

Research mini-project

Conduct research of your own to find out whether ENSO events are being experienced this year in the Caribbean and/or other parts of the world.

Not all ENSO events are severe, but Caribbean people need to be aware that the drier part of the year can be prolonged and intensified through natural causes.

BOX 5.8**ENSO effects in Guyana**

The worldwide ENSO events of 1997–1998 resulted in a prolonged and intense drought in Guyana, not only in the interior Rupununi savannas but throughout the whole country. The rainy season of November 1997 to January 1998 did not arrive. Rivers were greatly reduced in volume, groundwater stores were depleted and in the remote areas springs and wells dried up. The effects on the country included:

- A shortage of drinking water, causing many families to use unsafe or untreated supplies, thus risking waterborne diseases.
- A substantial fall in the acreage under rice and sugar. Rice needs a plentiful supply of water for sowing. These are the major export crops, indicating a significant loss in earnings.
- Saltwater intrusions on some rivers, making the water unfit for irrigation purposes.
- Soil erosion, especially in the savannas of the interior.

Emergency measures were put in place to bring short-term relief to the population and to agriculture, especially:

- water conservation strategies – rationing of water, delivery of water to stricken areas, extension services;
- increasing the supply – use of pumps to supply water to reservoirs and irrigation channels and the drilling of wells;
- relief assistance to families.

A longer-term plan was an assessment of the needs of the country in addressing a drought of this nature. It was decided that in Amerindian settlements hand pumps were needed and in the Georgetown area submersible pumps, as well as the drilling of additional wells, would ensure a more reliable supply. In addition, farmers who had lost their crops would be supplied with seeds for the next season. The assessment showed that greater attention had to be paid to land use such as deforestation and human activities that lead to soil erosion and land degradation. These activities prevent the groundwater store from being replenished. Thus, any drought mitigation strategy must take into consideration human impacts on the environment.

BOX 5.9**Predicting ENSO**

Scientists have been collecting empirical data for some years now on atmospheric pressures over the oceans and sea surface temperatures and the connection between the two. On a daily basis, moored buoys in the equatorial Pacific Ocean measure sea surface temperature, ocean currents and air pressure. This is the first place where an ENSO event begins, so this region is now rigorously monitored and all stages of an ENSO event can be studied. Scientists can tell us a year in advance whether the next year will have an unusually active hurricane season or drier than normal conditions.

In the Caribbean, ENSO forecasts can help countries to anticipate and plan for periods of drought and floods, and they prove useful in agricultural planning. However, national systems of disaster preparedness such as early warning systems for droughts and floods should be put in place. The bodies running these will be able to use the ENSO forecasts to devise timely strategies to assist in mitigating the impacts of such disasters. Drought is a creeping disaster, so forewarning may greatly assist countries in reducing its impact.

When we add the knowledge that through size, relief and location some parts of Caribbean countries are already very dry, we realise that drought is an ever-present hazard.

Drought and human activity

The depletion of the supply of fresh water in rivers, which contributes to drought-like conditions, is caused by many human activities. For example, deforestation practices

contribute to the silting of rivers and drying up of water courses. Polluting rivers with sewage encourages algae to flourish and this chokes streams, which eventually become stagnant. The groundwater store also becomes depleted through human activities. For example, channelling and paving stretches of rivers interferes with the infiltration of rainwater to replenish the underground water supply. Deforestation, too, often leads to soil erosion, leaving the ground hard and impermeable and preventing infiltration of rain for underground water storage. The water supply held in lakes, dams, wells and reservoirs tends to be severely depleted in the dry season as it is used for irrigating crops and for urban demands such as drinking, other domestic uses, watering gardens, washing cars and industrial uses. The growth of population and improvements in living standards also put a strain on the water supply. Caribbean populations, particularly urban populations, are growing and therefore so is the demand for water. At the same time, the supply from rainfall in the dry season is inadequate and that from groundwater stores is being greatly reduced.

Effects of drought

Water shortages and a lower than normal water supply have both short-term and long-term effects on agriculture, human beings and the environment. For example:

- as soil moisture decreases, vegetation wilts and eventually dies;
- low soil moisture prevents or delays germination of crops, leading to low yields;
- when vegetation dies, the bare ground encourages soil erosion;
- the reduced groundwater store takes a long time to be replenished (sometimes years), and some rivers may dry up permanently;
- competition for water tends to lead to conflict, with rationing of water for different socioeconomic groups and conflicts over who decides how water should be apportioned between irrigation, recreation and urban supply.

Caribbean people have adapted their social and cultural practices to the dry and wet seasons of the tropical marine climate. Reaping, building, fixing roofs, kite flying and cricket tend to be left for the dry season. Planting of the major cash and food crops is done in the rainy season, which is also the football season. Social and cultural life, then, has adapted to the climatic regime. However, there is a need now to raise the consciousness of Caribbean people that increasingly the dry season may be more severe than it has been in the past and that the

rainy season may not necessarily restore groundwater supplies. Social and cultural life, then, should reflect an increasing geographic awareness about something as fundamental and taken for granted as the climate.

Floods

As we have already seen, when flooding occurs it can represent an environmental disaster. Houses and livestock can be washed away, and major disruption occurs as a result, including the possibility of waterborne diseases such as cholera, especially where water pipelines have been damaged.

In the Caribbean, flooding usually occurs because of hurricanes or tropical storms bringing torrential rain, often accompanied by storm surges. For example, in St Vincent and the Grenadines, St Lucia and Dominica heavy rain and high winds just before Christmas 2013 caused widespread flooding and landslides in which a number of people were killed and many had to be evacuated from their homes (Relief Web, 2013).

ACTIVITY 5.8

Consider the following questions.

1. To what extent is your country at risk of drought and floods as major environmental hazards?
2. a. What immediate mitigating strategies should be useful in reducing the impact of drought?
b. What longer-term measures are likely to reduce the negative impacts of drought in the future?
3. a. Describe any major floods that have affected your country in recent years.
b. Recommend some strategies to reduce the impact of floods.



SUMMARY

Environmental hazards as described above only become disasters because they impact adversely on human lives and livelihoods. For example a strong hurricane passing far out to sea is of only minor interest. In the Caribbean dense population growth has occurred in low-lying coastal settlements. This increases the potential for an environmental disaster to arise from a natural environmental hazard. Caribbean governments and regulatory bodies often do not take a long term view of disaster mitigation. It is crucial for housing to be regulated and density controlled in areas prone to environmental disasters. The most successful strategy would be to re-settle residents in safer locations, but that is fraught with political issues.



Wrap Up

The Caribbean region is prone to a number of environmental hazards, some of which, like soil erosion, drought and coral reef destruction, can be overcome by sensible use of resources, data gathering and proper management and monitoring. Some threats, however, are difficult to predict and control, such as hurricanes, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. Increasing our geographical awareness of these threats is one way that will help us to develop more enlightened perspectives on the environment, which should not only protect the environment but significantly reduce our vulnerability as well.

This chapter has shown that these issues are not only geographical or geological but stem from social and cultural practices as well. Paradoxically, there is little emphasis put on meaningful development of mitigation strategies and long-term disaster planning, and even the threats we can control, such as soil erosion, are not priority issues in development planning. The poor, especially, suffer from a lack of attention to environmental threats.

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Research TOPICS

1. In a country where there has been a recent earthquake, volcanic or hurricane disaster, you could follow one of these ideas for developing a research project.

- Interview survivors to find out the strategies they used in coming to terms with the disaster.
- Interview (or use questionnaires) to find out how the disaster impacted on the economy in a small area.
- Interview people who experienced the disaster, as well as various authorities, to determine how the authorities 'managed' the different phases of the event.

Alternatively, you may wish to study accounts of two environmental disasters to compare and contrast their effects on Caribbean culture and society – perhaps Hurricane Ivan in Grenada and Jamaica or volcanic eruptions in St Vincent and Montserrat. This could be done via a document study.

2. Other research areas studying the impact of geographical phenomena might be:

- studying the nature of pollution in an area and its impact on culture and society;
- examining farming practices in an area to determine whether these practices contribute to soil erosion, or to what extent farming practices are influenced by poverty;
- compiling statistics on drought in an identified country in different years and studying the impact on culture and society;
- making a case study of a coral reef, using documentary evidence and interviews with key informants on the nature of the threat, mitigation strategies and results;
- analysing the perceptions of people about how they can safeguard life and property in the event of a disaster; to what extent are they well informed?

Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Explain what is meant by drought being a 'creeping hazard'. (2 marks)
(b) Describe TWO mitigating strategies to address the problem of drought. (4 marks)
- 2 (a) Describe TWO cultural practices which lead to accelerated soil erosion. (4 marks)
(b) Explain ONE way in which soil erosion is related to drought. (2 marks)
- 3 (a) Explain what is meant by the term 'mitigation strategy'. (2 marks)
(b) Describe ONE long-term and ONE short-term mitigation strategy to address soil erosion. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) Describe TWO ways in which the natural physical environment influences settlement patterns in the Lesser Antilles. (4 marks)
(b) Identify ONE way by which Caribbean people have altered the natural physical environment for the benefit of society and culture. (2 marks)
- 5 (a) Outline the theory of plate tectonics. (4 marks)
(b) Explain why there are no volcanoes on the island of Barbados. (2 marks)
- 6 (a) Describe ONE advantage of volcanic activity. (2 marks)
(b) State TWO ways in which society and culture in Montserrat have been adversely affected by volcanic activity. (4 marks)
- 7 (a) Explain why hurricanes lose their strength over land. (2 marks)
(b) For an identified hurricane (name and year), describe TWO different effects on ONE named Caribbean country. (4 marks)
- 8 (a) Explain what causes earthquakes to occur. (2 marks)
(b) Outline TWO strategies that Caribbean people can take to minimise the threat from earthquake activity. (4 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Describe the ways in which coral reefs have contributed to social and cultural life in the Caribbean.
- 2 Explain why the Caribbean is described as being at risk of drought and suggest some ways in which drought problems can be mitigated.
- 3 Describe a recent instance of flooding in your own country or another country in the Caribbean and outline the extent to which the areas affected were prepared.
- 4 Define the term *soil conservation* and describe how it is being addressed in your country or area.

Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 Discuss the point of view that poverty greatly increases the problem of soil erosion in Caribbean countries.
- 2 Using ONE Caribbean country as an example, examine the extent to which it has developed a comprehensive mitigation strategy for dealing with environmental hazards.
- 3 Account for the situation today in the Caribbean where the majority of people live in risky environments.
- 4 To what extent is knowledge of the theory of plate tectonics important for Caribbean people in all walks of life?

6

The Impact of Societal Institutions on Caribbean People



Students in a Caribbean classroom

The family, education, religion and the justice system are social institutions which we as social beings have created and continue to recreate daily. Social institutions shape and direct our lives, our interactions and our thoughts, yet for the most part we are not consciously aware of them. This chapter intends to bring the taken-for-granted nature of social institutions to light. Each institution has a history and each has evolved in some way over time, showing evidence of both continuity and change. Each social institution is studied according to how it has evolved, how it impacts on Caribbean people and how they in turn are having an impact on it.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. explain what is meant by societal institutions and social organisations;
2. describe the role that societal institutions and social organisations play in society and culture;
3. compare different sociological perspectives on societal institutions;
4. describe the history and evolution of selected societal institutions in the Caribbean;
5. analyse how the family, education, religion and the justice system impact on individuals, groups and other societal institutions in Caribbean society and culture.

6.1

Societal institutions

Societal institutions have evolved to solve the problems of living in society. People who live together as a society need to agree upon certain arrangements if they are to minimise conflicts. For example, while people may have different ideas about how to rear children or educate them, for the purposes of the ‘common good’ there must be some agreement, at least in a general way, about how these tasks should be addressed. The social institutions of education, the family, religion and the justice system are all based on organising ideas about how these key areas of social life should be ordered.

Any study of social institutions, then, must examine these ideas and beliefs, some of which are dominant and some of which are peripheral or marginal. The dominant ideas and beliefs are usually those of the ruling class or the rich and powerful, and tend to be the ones that others also find legitimate. The ideas and beliefs of minorities, the poor, radical groups, and others who are in some way against the mainstream, are also part of the social institutions of a country. However, their ideas and beliefs are not felt to be legitimate by the majority of people in a society and so may be suppressed or only associated with marginalised communities. Institutional ideas and beliefs, both dominant and peripheral, compete with each other over time, bringing about social change.

◆ **Think of TWO suitable examples in Caribbean society and culture where groups or individuals going against mainstream ideas and beliefs are ‘punished’ in different ways by members of society.**

For example, a dominant idea in the social institution of education is that it is best done in schools, but nowadays there are some people who are home schooling their children. They usually come under severe criticism from those holding mainstream views. The social institution of education, like that of the family or religion or the justice system, is made up of many ideas and beliefs about how best to accomplish the tasks of living in society. If someone goes against the mainstream, that person usually suffers some ‘punishment’ handed down by society – censure, discrimination, ridicule or ostracism. Parents who prefer to school their children at home face continued opposition from other parents, who invariably try to show them that what they are doing is wrong.

How does something as insubstantial as an idea or a set of beliefs become a basic building block for society? Whether it is rearing the young (family), learning knowledge and skills (education), valuing the next life (religion), or devising the rights, duties and obligations of citizens (the justice system), each institution becomes tangible through the organisations that members create to fulfil these ideas and beliefs. So in the social institution of religion, members have created various churches, faiths, sects and cults to translate their ideas about the spiritual realm into tangible forms such as rituals, sacred objects, creeds and dogma. Non-believers are also a part of the institution because they are denying ‘the idea’; they form an opposing or peripheral group. Non-mainstream religions too are part of the social institution of religion, also posing alternative ideas, so that within the institution of religion there are tensions and conflicts between those holding dominant ideas and beliefs and those holding subordinate ideas and beliefs. The ideas and beliefs forming a social institution then become concrete in the society through social organisations that reflect these ideas and how they are held.

◆ Churches are some of the social organisations associated with the social institution of religion. Give examples of the social organisations associated with the social institutions of education and the economy.

Socialisation is the process through which the cherished ideas and beliefs of one generation become the cherished ideas of the next. Members are born into a society where they are socialised into accepting the social institutions that organise that society. Only if they are born into peripheral groups suffering some disadvantage will the institution seem oppressive. For example, members of the Rastafarian community who have experienced persecution in the past and today are more likely than, say, Methodists to feel that the institutional ideas and beliefs in Jamaican society about religion are oppressive. Even if an institution may be working to someone's disadvantage, as when thousands of students fail every year to obtain full examination credentials on leaving school, members may be so thoroughly socialised into accepting the present system that they do not question how education is organised. Thus, once the dominant ideas about education become concretised in the society through social organisations and the socialisation process, it becomes difficult to change them. If change becomes imminent there is always a struggle between those who hold the ideas that have been dominant and those who hold the ideas that are now becoming dominant. For example, in our society primary education has always been offered to the masses but secondary education long remained accessible only to a few, namely the more affluent classes. The move to offer secondary education to poorer citizens was opposed by those who felt that 'higher' education was a 'privilege' and not a right.

Within each social institution there are norms, values, statuses and roles. In the family as a social institution, value is placed on nurturing and caring for the young. From that value, norms arise – yardsticks and standards that have evolved about how we should act – and so there is a norm in the family about having loving relationships. These norms are carried out through our behaviour; in families parents are motivated by love to assume overall responsibility to feed, clothe, shelter and keep children from harm.

The status (or assigned position or location) of 'mother', 'father' or 'grandparent' confers certain roles (expectations of behaviour) that each should perform according to the institutional ideas of the family, and these are in keeping with the dominant ideas about values, norms and behaviour in that society. For example,

motherhood is a cherished status and there are quite stringent demands made of mothers to conform to a particular role: namely, to always put their children first, to love and cherish them and to attend to their wants and needs. 'Playing a role' is not a straightforward thing – a person's behaviour associated with a particular status (for example, mother, wife) is largely circumscribed by the institutional beliefs about how such a person should act. If, for example, a mother leaves her children for whatever reason, she will be going against the cherished ideas and beliefs associated with her status and role and thus the norms of behaviour that mothers adopt. She will therefore be criticised and perhaps ostracised. Although the act of leaving may have been necessary, she too will probably suffer personal guilt and remorse in not being able to fulfil such an important role. Rebellion, resistance and adopting a different point of view also come about when people find the institutional ideas that govern their lives irksome, and this tension creates the possibility of change in social institutions.

Social institutions, then, are the fundamental building blocks of any society. They vary from society to society and over time and are built on the ideals that people in that society have about the best ways of accomplishing the tasks of living together collectively. For example, the social institution of the family exists in all societies but different ideas and beliefs may be cherished from one society to another. In Islamic societies, authority, power and final responsibility lie with men. In many white American families today there is more emphasis on both the male and female sharing responsibilities, and in the Caribbean, among the poorer socioeconomic groups, women who are heads of households are the main decision-makers. Institutional ideas and beliefs also vary over time. The Hindu family in the Caribbean has traditionally been patriarchal but today there is a growing number of Hindu professional women who opt to live alone or seek more equal status within marriage than their mothers had.



SUMMARY

Social institutions are said to be the building blocks of the society. The foundations of a society rest on the most valued ideas and beliefs it has about how life should be organised. Ideas and beliefs about how to bring up the young and teach them what they should know form the basis of the institution of education in a country. These ideas and beliefs comprising the institution of education become translated into concrete forms, structures, processes and entities called social organisations, such as

the Ministry of Education, schools, parent–teacher organisations, and others. So it is too with religion and the economy. In each social institution there are competing ideas and beliefs, and usually those of the more powerful groups are translated into the kinds of social organisations that develop. With the passing of one dominant group, over time the social institutions undergo change and therefore the social organisations to which they give rise also change. However, while change occurs there always persist older dominant ideas and beliefs, so that a social institution is really a site of contest where older and contemporary ideas and beliefs and those of marginalised groups continually compete for legitimacy in the society.

ACTIVITY 6.1

1. Match each term in Column A of the table with its meaning in Column B (answers on page 164).
2. Describe ONE dominant idea or belief and ONE alternative or peripheral idea or belief in the social institution of education in your country.

Column A		Column B	
1	Social institution	A	A label identifying one's social position or location
2	Social organisation	B	Cherished beliefs and values influencing social life
3	Status	C	The process by which one learns the rules of society
4	Norms	D	A set of behaviours expected of one's status
5	Socialisation	E	Concrete, structured patterns in social life based on ideas and beliefs
6	Role	F	Accepted standards for behaviour in a society

6.2

The family

The social institution of the family is found in all societies and represents the cherished ideas and beliefs that people have about rearing children and socialising them into

the norms of their society. It encompasses courtship, mating, marriage, childrearing and family life. The social institutions of education and religion interact closely with the family, as both are involved in inculcating certain values in members, but especially in young members, as they are expected to carry on the traditions of the society.

6.2.1 2.1 Historical Context

In studying the evolution of the social institution of the family in the Caribbean we are in fact analysing the dominant and subordinate ideas about families over time. For example:

- The ways that Caribs or Tainos used to nurture the younger members of their society (for example, the rite of initiation of young Carib boys into the status of warrior) have all but disappeared from mainstream ideas about family today.
- African peoples during the period of slavery preserved family life through an extended network of support, but it was not necessarily based on marriage. Family life centred around the mother (matrifocal relationships; see Box 6.1) and the extended kin (family connections).



Fig. 6.1 An extended family

- Europeans brought to the Caribbean the dominant idea of the nuclear family – two parents who were legally married with children of that union living together as a household. Their ideas became entrenched in the society through colonial rule (Box 6.2, page 144), yet the majority of the people lived in matrifocal families and continued to create them.
- Indians and Africans brought the extended family to the Caribbean. Indian families often lived together in joint households. (Fig. 6.1 shows a modern extended family.)
- All the other smaller groups in the Caribbean today (the Maya, the Amerindian people of Guyana, the Javanese, the Chinese, the Syrian-Lebanese communities) have family forms and ways of organising the family that sometimes differ from the prevailing mainstream institutional ideas about family.

Research mini-project

Conduct independent research on ONE of the groups mentioned here and describe at least one example of how its family forms or family practices differ from those in the mainstream.

6.2.2 Caribbean Family Forms

While marriage and nuclear families are more widespread today, Caribbean family forms continue to be extremely diverse – single parents, common law and visiting relationships, one man with two or more families, children with different fathers residing with their mother as a household, and households headed by grandmothers.

BOX 6.1 Matrifocal families

Matrifocal families are those where the mother or a maternal figure is the centre (or focus) of the family. The caring and nurturing element provided by the mother is the hub around which the family's activities take place. Many Caribbean families are matrifocal in that, whether the union is described as 'common law' or 'visiting', or the family as 'single parent' or even 'nuclear', the mother figure is the person who organises the family's affairs.

She is the main cook and housekeeper and for the most part also works outside the home. Her income, supplemented by that of the other adults in the home, goes towards buying food, household items, school books and 'helping out' other members from time to time. Even though a husband or intimate male companion may be present, he tends not to be as deeply involved in the daily activities which take care of the needs of family members. He may, for instance, buy major household items, pay the rent or mortgage and be a source of authority, but he does not really know the name of the schoolteacher or when the child has a school function; in fact, he may only occasionally attend parent-teacher meetings, go to the grocery or shop for clothes.

In the Caribbean the central place of the mother or grandmother in the family goes on long after a child grows up, marries and moves away from home. She is a confidante and can help to manipulate situations because she is respected and has a certain amount of power within the family (for example, she can give advice and even strong direction in marital disputes, she assists with financial problems, she provides encouragement

on a daily basis and she takes care of her children's children). Members of the family visit regularly and these visits usually coincide with meals – food is a central theme around which the mother figure becomes the key to the whole family.

Matrifocal families are sometimes confused with **matriarchal** families. Some matrifocal families may

Matriarchal means 'rule of the mother'. It occurs when women are the heads of their families and descent and inheritance are reckoned in the female line.

in fact have matriarchal elements. In the Caribbean, issues of descent and inheritance are more likely to be through the father, but there are many Caribbean households where a male figure is absent or so marginal to the family that the mother takes care of all the business of the family. However, as a general rule the man is the dominant figure in the family, whether he is there all the time or only some of the time.

As a source of contrast, Indian families are typically described as patriarchal. Men lead a privileged existence, resulting in the oppression of women. That being said, within the daily round of the family's affairs, matrifocal elements occur – around nurturing, caring, listening and giving advice. However, when the male members of the family grow up and impose their authority, decision-making may not take the mother's wishes or views into consideration. She becomes a respected but powerless figure.

BOX 6.2

The myth of the nuclear family

The institutional ideas about the family in the contemporary Caribbean reflect a bias towards accepting the co-residential nuclear family as the ideal to which we should aspire. During colonial rule ethnocentric scholars interpreted the diversity of Caribbean family forms as 'inferior' models of families. The many different kinds of unions – single parents, unwed couples, visiting arrangements, several partners – and the prevalence of matrifocal households were described as 'disorganised families' or 'unstable unions'. From there, the scholars of the colonial era went on to describe Caribbean males as irresponsible and females as promiscuous. Missionaries and colonial authorities thought that the salvation of the Caribbean family lay in enforcing marriage (Barrow, 1996).

The bias towards the nuclear family is at the heart of the negative portrayal of Caribbean families. Accepting the nuclear unit as the norm also meant that there was acceptance of the gender stereotypes where men were cast as 'breadwinners' and 'authority figures' and women as 'homemakers' and 'caregivers'. Any other arrangement – for example, a visiting union – was therefore portrayed as 'disorganised', 'loose', 'unstable' and 'irregular', because the conventional stereotypes could not be applied.

Many theories have been suggested to explain why these family forms persist in the Caribbean, when the institutional beliefs are biased towards the nuclear family (Box 6.2).

Caribbean family life

The emphasis on family forms has in many ways not been meaningful in understanding Caribbean families, so research has now shifted focus to examine how Caribbean families function and what the experience is like of living in such a family (Box 6.3). Caribbean family forms are 'normal' for those living in them. They carry out the same functions as the family anywhere provides for its members – love and belonging, reproduction, food and shelter, socialisation and economic support. In addition, for Caribbean people the extensive network of kin constitutes 'the family', not the household. The focus on

the composition of the household (based on the nuclear family as the norm) resulted in Caribbean families being labelled as 'disorganised' and 'irregular' (see Box 6.2).

Kinship and cooperation

The practices of ritual godparenthood and fictive kinship show the importance of kin in different types of Caribbean family, especially Christian families. Godparents, for example, are chosen to provide another source of support for a child. The family of the godparent (if not already relatives) become as close as kin, thereby extending the network of relatives. In Trinidad a woman may use the term 'my maco mère' to describe her child's godmother, and the godfather is referred to as 'compère' – both terms are derived from the French-based patois. This extended network can become so large that distinctions are jokingly made between who is 'family' and who are just 'relatives'.

Cooperation, support and caring for family members are normal parts of family life, whether it is lending help in building a house or taking care of elderly relatives at home. The practice of child shifting – leaving a child with another (usually older) relative while the parent migrates for work or even moves to a different household – reflects the idea that the extended family is expected to shoulder responsibilities. This emphasis on family responsibility is also seen in land ownership. Individual ownership of land, while important, does not detract from the significance of family land. No one member can claim family land and it can be used by various family members according to their needs. This arrangement requires cooperation and the feeling of caring and responsibility for one another, and is quite alien to European notions, which regard 'the family' as 'the household' and value private rather than communal property.

Research mini-project

Conduct a small survey (choose a wide cross section of persons) to investigate whether people have biases towards a particular family form, and analyse the reasons they offer for their preference.

Impact of the family on Caribbean society and culture

The impact of the institution of the family on society and culture can be studied through its effects on individuals, groups and other institutions. The impact of the institutional ideas of family varies both between families and within them. Family childrearing practices and norms depend on how the members of the family interact and what their notion of 'family' is.

BOX 6.3

Theorising Caribbean family life

Sociological and other theories about family life concern both historical and economic explanations for Caribbean family forms as they exist today.

- **African retentions.** Matrifocal households are typical of West Africa, where polygamy is commonly practised and a husband accommodates his wives in separate households. The view that Caribbean family forms are based largely on African cultural retentions is continually debated. However, this view acknowledges that slavery must have impacted on the traditional African family forms and altered them in some way.
- **Slavery.** Others believe that cultural retentions such as family life could not have survived slavery. The unions and practices that the enslaved were forced to adopt on the plantations influenced the family forms of today. Marriage was rare, cohabitation was irregular and life was unpredictable, so that stable families could not develop. Children remained with their mothers and European laws and sanctions discouraged marriage between the races or between enslaved persons.
- **Economic thesis.** Since slavery ended more than 150 years ago, some scholars believe that another theory may be more relevant. The fact that the variety in family forms is found mainly among the poorer classes suggests an economic argument. Their research shows that poor, unemployed or underemployed women are willing to get involved in sexual relationships for very practical reasons such as financial help, especially if they are mothers. Poor unemployed or underemployed men can only occasionally provide that kind of support. Thus, women tend not to look for one enduring relationship that may become burdensome but seek several successive relationships, which will help to provide the means for the household to survive. The emphasis here on children, and not a stable relationship with a man, is because a mother regards her children not as liabilities but as a possible support network for her in her old age. Critics of the economic thesis point out that today there are extramarital affairs, single parenthood, premarital maternity, visiting and common law relationships and 'outside' children, at all levels

of society. And even when the standard of living rises and there are improvements in the living and working conditions of lower socioeconomic groups, there is no appreciable increase in marriage or nuclear households. The economic argument that poverty is the root cause for the variety of Caribbean family forms assumes that wealthy persons establish mainly nuclear families, one household and monogamous relationships. The reality is that high-status men historically have always maintained 'outside' relationships with women of lower social standing and reared second and even third families, the children of which may benefit from their wealthy fathers' connections in obtaining increased opportunities for study and better-paying jobs. The economic argument is also put to the test because the increasing incomes of Caribbean families have not resulted in major changes in mating and marriage patterns.

- **Gender inequality.** One important sociologist, R.T. Smith (2004), discusses the complexity of Caribbean family patterns and suggests that while African retentions and the experience of plantation life must have impacted on African Caribbean family forms, the persistence of such forms today requires a more sensitive interpretation of family life. He too discounts the economic arguments as being the root cause. He feels that the persistence of gender inequality, which has not changed over the centuries in any substantial way, may have more explanatory power. He looks at studies describing 'masculinities' in the Caribbean and suggests that what gives men a feeling of power and control is not necessarily marriage and a monogamous household but a life outside of marriage. Thus, men may have outside families and relationships as well as deep commitments to activities and pastimes that take them out of the home for long periods – work, sports, relaxing with friends, playing cards, drinking in bars. This is an interesting analysis and it forces us to examine gender socialisation in the Caribbean, the processes by which we socialise boys and girls into their respective social roles.

ACTIVITY 6.2

Read Box 6.3 carefully. Examine each of the arguments given and suggest an explanation about the origins and variety of Caribbean family forms that seems credible to you. You can either follow one of the arguments suggested in Box 6.3, combine more than one of them, or suggest your own original thesis.

Individuals

While a particular group is said to have a dominant set of ideas and beliefs about family, different individuals in that family will experience these ideas and beliefs differently. This can be illustrated by the example of Indian families, which as we have seen traditionally have a patriarchal structure (as, for example, in Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad). The men are respected and obeyed, and family and gender relations are based on this 'family hierarchy'. The experience of a girl in such a family is far different from that of the eldest son, who is the heir and is groomed to take over as head of the family. Such a girl in the Caribbean will most likely be educated, even up to the tertiary level, but the relationships in which she lives demand reverence for her father, deference to her brothers and a code of conduct based on obedience and purity. This authoritarian structure is sometimes strained and the family can be traumatised when girls find themselves at odds with the family's wishes. This is most likely to happen in issues of courtship, marriage and family life.

Groups

The institutional idea of 'kin' and how it impacts on different groups is discussed below, as well as the way institutional ideas about family affect women as a group.

- **African families.** Kin in the extended African family includes uncles, aunts, grandparents and others related by blood, marriage or fictive kinship ties. These ties extend to people in the diaspora who send money back home or sponsor family members to become new migrants in the metropole. The idea of kin has a favourable impact on Caribbean people when they are helped, but it can be burdensome when someone is expected to help an endless succession of relatives as a matter of course.
- **Muslim families.** In Islam the issues of kinship and the extended family include the practice of polygamy – the custom of having more than one wife. Within the Caribbean this is not widespread, even in countries with a large Muslim population, because of the dominance of an urban, western bias towards the nuclear model. Even so, polygamous families do occur, increasing the complexity of the notion of kin and the extended family in Caribbean society and culture. Such families come under a great deal of scrutiny by others and they may deliberately restrict their social interaction to avoid the curiosity and criticism of those in the mainstream. In other words, the dominant ideas and beliefs that privilege a nuclear family marginalise those groups who do not follow such norms.

- **Women.** Caribbean women find themselves accommodating to institutional ideas which have locked them into certain roles that have worked to their disadvantage relative to men. They are seen primarily as mothers – the major caregiver and nurturer and the 'natural' person to be the homemaker. Men seldom share this burden equally. For the most part women also work outside the home and then come home to the 'second shift' – domestic chores, taking care of children, supervising schoolwork and becoming up to date with what is going on with everyone. These institutional ideas and how they play out in individual homes are responsible for *gender socialisation* – how young girls and boys in families understand the different roles played by men and women and learn to perpetuate them.

Institutions

The institution of the family has an impact on other institutions in society. For example, ideas about the family impact on education in many ways. Educators continually call for 'parental involvement' because they know that a child's academic success is based largely on the support received at home. But research evidence shows that parents of lower socioeconomic status are reluctant to interact with teachers, or visit the school, or supervise homework. While there may be many reasons for this, including the demands of working-class jobs, an inadequate academic foundation and being intimidated by the attitudes of teachers, it nevertheless remains true that family background is an important factor in educational performance. Thus, the social institution of the family has an impact on the social institution of education.

- ◆ **Describe ONE way in which the social institution of religion impacts on the social institution of family in your country.**



SUMMARY

The family is the institution responsible for rearing of children and the socialisation of young members into society. Ideas and beliefs about the family are inherited from previous generations and undergo some change over time. They are translated into more tangible forms known as social organisations. Dominant and alternative ideas and beliefs have an impact on the society at the level of individuals, groups and institutions.

6.3

Education

Education is concerned with socialising members of society into the norms, values, knowledge and skills that a society deems important. In its socialising function, education is similar to the family or religion. Education can be formal or informal. In the family one learns many things about living and surviving in the society into which one was born; that is called informal education or *primary socialisation*. In its formal aspects education refers to the transmission of knowledge and skills in social organisations such as schools, known as *secondary socialisation*.

6.3.1 Historical Context

Precolonial education

Before Contact with the Europeans, Amerindian education consisted of the passing on of life and survival skills from one generation to another, and was based on gender. Amerindian women introduced girls to the domestic skills that accompanied their gendered role in society, while men taught their sons to hunt, fish, build material structures, as well as to identify and understand the flora and fauna of the forests. This informal education has continued in Amerindian communities until recently, and is still an important traditional practice in many tribal societies.

Most Amerindians were enslaved by the invading Spanish forces, and apart from religious education in the *encomienda* system (§2.3.2) no formal learning systems were set up for them.

Education under slavery

Under slavery, both of Amerindians and later of Africans, formal education was largely for the children of the Europeans. While the Spanish were not averse to giving religious instruction to the enslaved, generally speaking their education was discouraged. The planters felt that it would increase their capacity to think about their predicament and thereby stir up unrest. The 1834 Emancipation Act ensured through the Negro Education Grant that elementary schools would be built throughout the British Caribbean. After Emancipation, elites felt that education would help the ex-slaves to make the transition to a free society. Only the 'elements' were encouraged, however. Reading, writing, arithmetic and a little geography were offered, the Bible was the main text and the curriculum was steeped in British values,

songs, poems, stories and customs. Elementary (rather than primary) education meant that education was not expected to go further. To do otherwise, the planters felt, would disrupt the social order (that is, the system of social stratification).

There were, however, a few secondary schools, where fees were charged. They were modelled on English grammar schools and a classical curriculum. Some Caribbean scholars (mostly males) were able to attend British universities such as Oxford, Cambridge and London. They returned as the eminent lawyers, doctors, writers, teachers and scholars who became involved in our efforts at decolonisation. They moved into labour politics and then on to the formation of political parties. By the 1960s and 1970s most of the former British colonies had become independent, showing that the planters had been right – that secondary and further education were likely to foster dissatisfaction and the desire to end oppression.

6.3.2 Dominant Ideas About Education

Some of the institutional ideas about education that are dominant today arose from the ideas that were prevalent from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries in Caribbean society and culture.

- Education was a means to social mobility for the labouring poor, with parents seeking to 'get education' for their children so that they would be eligible for 'respectable' jobs (not manual labour) and increase their wealth and prestige. This attitude still prevails today.
- The elites sought to block the former enslaved and their descendants from accessing secondary education. While elementary education was provided free by the state, and for a fee by denominational bodies, it was widely available. Not so secondary education. The general population felt obstructed in their quest for social mobility for their children.
- The secondary curriculum was steeped in European values and customs. African, Indian or Amerindian history and culture were not regarded as legitimate topics for Caribbean children. There was the strong feeling that only deeper understanding of western culture could help us to develop into modern nations. This contributed to the continuing value people have for European ideas.
- Only children who were 'bright' and showed aptitude for academic work were considered suitable for education at the secondary level and beyond. There was keen competition to enter secondary schools, and even later when more schools were built, the transition from primary to secondary schooling was accompanied by high-stakes examinations such as

the Common Entrance (a qualifying examination for secondary education in many Caribbean countries). This attitude can still be seen among parents and education establishments today.

- As more schools were built, the issue changed from securing a place at the secondary level to accessing a 'good' school. A persistent idea is that 'a better quality of education' is available at the top-ranked secondary schools, usually the higher-achieving, denominational schools. Needless to say, the 'brightest' students are selected by virtue of examination success and the comparison is always made with state secondary schools, seen by many as low achieving and having many kinds of discipline problems.

These dominant ideas in education are translated into the social organisations that frame our education system – for example, schools, examinations, streaming. These customary practices and traditions are derived from the institutional ideas and beliefs about education. For example, students are 'sorted' and 'allocated' to secondary schools based on selection mechanisms such as national examinations. These examinations are thought to be fair and to give every student an equal chance at accessing the school of his or her choice. In schools students are further streamed according to ability. These practices are taken for granted but we should be aware that they stem from the institutional ideas that have become entrenched in the ways we have of organising education. Ministries of education, examination boards, schools' internal examinations, scholarships, private lessons, placement of students, university matriculation requirements, choosing subjects, what counts as a full certificate – these are all examples of the social organisation of education.

The social institution of education is also shaped (though to a lesser extent) by the ideas about education that are less dominant. For example:

- The dominant idea about educating students with disabilities is to house such students separately, where they can get attention suited to their needs. The view that mainstreaming such students helps them to better integrate into society is less popular. Hence, in our education system, procedures, mechanisms and the special help they need for mainstreaming are usually absent.
- Home schooling is undertaken by families where there is a stay-at-home parent (usually the mother) who teaches her children using the curriculum of the public schools. Such families tend to feel that schools are dangerous places for their children, where they learn much that is undesirable – violence, obscene language, sexual practices and values that do not

privilege the spiritual and moral in everyday life. Some also feel that learning in school is too artificial, producing students who hate learning and are unable to think critically.

- ◆ **Identify ONE idea or belief about education in your country that you can see being implemented in the social organisation of education.**

6.3.3 The Purposes of Education

In the aftermath of slavery, the purpose of education (as the colonial authorities saw it) was to inculcate European values and customs so that governing the newly freed people would be easier. But to the former enslaved, education represented a means of social mobility. Without wealth or prestige, their only means of securing the independence of their children from a life of drudgery was through education. This would open up jobs in teaching and in the civil service. This very instrumental purpose of education is still with us – to get a 'good' job.

During the twentieth century, the purposes of the social institution of education became more complex. Now that it was mandatory for all children to be educated, there was the institutional idea that, since they would not all eventually contribute to the society in equal measure, their education had to be differentiated in some way. This led to practices that selected, sorted and allocated students so that the 'bright' ones followed a different path from the others in seeking to obtain educational qualifications. Tertiary education, especially university education, was viewed in ways similar to how secondary education had been viewed a century earlier. Only the academic elite were expected to go on to universities and thus to jobs guaranteeing them higher socioeconomic status as the intelligentsia (professional and intellectual class). The social institution of education thus performs a differentiating function on children, categorising them according to academic ability and placing them in different types of schools. Education, then, organises the opportunity and life chances of young people.

Another purpose that came to be associated with education was the idea that it could contribute to social cohesion and harmony – enabling people to come together. This idea is very similar to those of the nineteenth-century colonial authorities. If members of society experience a common curriculum, especially in a culturally plural society, then the likelihood is that they will be socialised into a set of national ideals and values, helping to integrate the society. Achieving social

cohesion, harmony, social stability or integration is an enduring purpose of education today.

The idea that education could contribute to economic development by inculcating skills and knowledge envisages the production of an educated workforce. A link was thus eventually made between education and national development (that ‘development’ or ‘economic development’ could be achieved by schooling people) – it was a means to an end. Thus many secondary schools were built that were based on this theory of people as human capital – that the people of a country should be regarded as a resource just like land or capital, and could be ‘upgraded’ (through education) to make a meaningful contribution to economic development.

In the last decade of the twentieth century very different purposes were being considered by international bodies such as the United Nations, postmodern thinkers in education and various groups in the society who

were committed to helping the poor, the oppressed, the disabled and others whom the education system had failed. The thinking changed from a human capital perspective to one concerned with how people could be given the opportunities to develop themselves and thus become both the means and ends of development. This is a human development perspective (see Box 6.4).

◆ **Reflect on the social institution of education in your country and identify practices and procedures that aim to develop an inclusive education system.**

Stemming from this human development perspective, the major purpose envisaged by official policy of the various territorial governments for the social institution of education now is Education for All (the slow learner, the out-of-school learner, the academic failure, the

BOX 6.4 Human development and education

This is referred to as a ‘postmodern’ view of development. Postmodernists view the theories of earlier scholars as grand narratives which subordinate the genuine experiences people have in the haste to portray what is ‘normal’ or ‘typical’.

The human development paradigm sees a role for education that is quite unlike the institutional ideas that have historically been dominant in the Caribbean as the social institution of education. Some of its major positions are:

- **A belief in inclusion.** No one should be denied education at any level for any reason, including past failure. This assumes that education is a right that all people need to fulfil their potential. Older people and those outside the formal school system are as important as those within the system. Past practices are being transformed into more flexible delivery modes; for example, the traditional sixth-form programme is now broken down into units taken in different years, and in distance learning and face-to-face scenarios to accommodate out-of-school learners.
- **The content of the curriculum.** The focus on ethnocentric ideas and organisation of knowledge has been balanced with more indigenous subject matter, such as Caribbean Studies and Caribbean history rewritten from a Caribbean perspective, and the introduction of non-traditional subjects at examination level in

secondary schools – Religion, Functional French, Functional Spanish and Communication Studies, all with a Caribbean focus.

- **The pedagogy of the curriculum.** It has been recognised that knowledge is culturally produced so that merely learning it involves learning other people’s ideas about what everyone should know. Human development principles ask that the curriculum be constructed in interaction with students who bring their impressions and experiences of the subject matter to be interrogated by the knowledge from texts and experts. Together with the teacher the students discuss what they know of the subject matter and how that knowledge complements or even contradicts the knowledge in textbooks. This view acknowledges that the learner is powerful and not a passive sponge absorbing content; teaching and learning should be built around what the learner brings to the situation. In order to do this effectively, teachers need to know their learners very well. This means that the social distance between teacher and learner has to be scaled down in order to bring more meaningful relationships to the classroom. ‘Social distance’ implies the traditional boundaries between teachers and students that prevent them from getting to know each other, which tend to be maintained in the interests of ‘discipline’. However, in this paradigm the teacher is also a learner.

disabled person, even the teacher as learner). This is an altogether different idea of what education should be about and it is competing in the institutional realm with the more traditional ideas, those which stem from human capital assumptions and are less inclusive.

6.3.4 The Impact of Education on Caribbean Society and Culture

Individuals

Education is expected to confer social mobility on individuals. Many thousands of Caribbean students have moved through primary, secondary and tertiary education to secure professional occupations – teachers, lawyers, doctors, engineers, researchers – and others have positions in business and private enterprise. Those with lower qualifications have been able to access technical, industrial and clerical jobs. For all these individuals the dominant ideas in the institution of education have ‘worked’; they were able to overcome the obstacles (the curriculum, examinations, distractions, family poverty) and secure credentials in order to obtain a suitable job – one where there is job security, the possibility of promotion and where the job is considered ‘respectable’.

For many hundreds of thousands of Caribbean people, though, the institution of education has not been enabling. The extreme importance and status placed on these credentials have engendered feelings of low self-esteem in those who have failed to acquire them. These individuals are aware, too, that it will hardly be possible to realise their aspirations. Education, then, can demoralise those individuals who fail to achieve. Underachievement may occur for many reasons, namely family poverty, family trauma, teenage pregnancies, drug use, indifferent teaching, learning disabilities, lack of learning readiness, negative experiences of schooling, lack of support, disillusionment with schooling and disinterest.

Even so, the prevailing dominant ideas often lay the blame for underachievement on the student, and very little is put in place to reorient the student who has left school without credentials into ways of getting back on the educational track. Thus, on the whole, the institution of education is very competitive, rewarding academic ability and those with the necessary social and cultural resources to meet its challenges. For the individual who fails to achieve, however, there are few options that can begin to lay the foundation for a life that he or she would want.

Groups

Education impacts on the various socioeconomic groups differently. Theorists say that schools have a middle-class

bias and are set up to reward children who have the necessary **cultural capital** to succeed in the academic

Cultural capital refers to the advantages that privilege brings in terms of social skills.

world. For example, middle-class children are able to ‘switch’ competently between forms of the local language and the standard, such as between the patois or dialect and Standard English. This ease of switching is attributed to their many and varied experiences, including travel, educational toys, home computers and involvement in varied extracurricular activities where they interact with different groups and in different contexts. They thus bring considerable linguistic competence to their schooling (their cultural capital). Lower-income students tend to be more competent in non-standard forms of the language and have fewer opportunities to use formal language. Thus, written language expressed in the standard for school and examination success is more likely to elude them. The school does not deal specifically with how the first language of students interferes with their capability in the standard form. The social institution of education therefore confers more challenges on children of lower socioeconomic groups than on those of the middle classes.

◆ **Identify forms of cultural capital that middle- and higher-income students possess (other than standard language proficiency) which helps them to excel in school.**

Institutions

A well-developed historic feature of the social institution of education in the Caribbean is its interaction with the social institution of religion. Denominational groups made the first serious attempts to provide education and parents tend to have a preference for religious schools. This has led most of these schools to become high-demand establishments where only the very talented are accepted; thus they are also elite schools. The preference for religion in education does not necessarily mean that parents want their children to be inducted into the denomination of the school. Parents recognise the importance of socialisation as well, and they feel that the values taught in a religious school will help their children to become better persons. This preference for religious schools has an impact on state schools, where religion is not emphasised, and this situation forms part of the institutional environment of education in Caribbean countries. State schools therefore tend to be seen as less

legitimate than denominational schools in the business of socialising (i.e. educating) children.

The dilemma for the state is that it is concerned with equity for all and not primarily with promoting religious values. It thus has an obligation to provide for the education of all children and cannot select a religious perspective per se (especially in multi-religious contexts) or only focus on the needs of the most talented children. State schools, then, tend to be of all kinds – high achieving as well as low achieving – because they cater for all.

◆ **To what extent are denominational schools in your country held in higher regard than state schools?**

Gender bias

Many people feel that schools and the education system in general suffers from *gender bias*. This often results from gender stereotypes that assume, for example, that boys will prefer (and probably be more adept at) sporting activities, where girls are more comfortable with writing, reading and other verbal skills. This is particularly evident in the career choices that we expect our children to make, and the way we as a society, and the schools they attend, direct them in a gendered way towards such career choices. It is not always a conscious process. For example, nursing, teaching, secretarial work and librarianship are predominantly ‘female-type’ occupations, as opposed to careers as scientists or doctors. These choices arise from, and also influence, decisions on which subjects to study in the higher years of schooling. Although more opportunities are now available to girl students to take subjects such as science, mathematics and metalwork or woodwork, it is evident that girls are mainly socialised to follow stereotypically ‘feminine’ professions, while boys continue to prefer ‘masculine’ careers. Some theorists attribute this phenomenon to biological factors, such as different brain wiring or hormonal distinctions; others believe that social conditioning is mainly to blame.



SUMMARY

The ideas and beliefs that are dominant in the social institution of education lead to the purposes that the social organisations in education try to fulfil. Some purposes have changed over time. In the aftermath of Emancipation, schooling protected social stability, and while that is still important, socialising the young into the knowledge, skills and values needed by the society has become a major purpose. This idea struggles with

postmodern notions of education for human development. At the same time education tends to be gendered in its effects. All these phenomena have an impact on individuals, groups and other social institutions in Caribbean society and culture.

6.4

The social institution of religion

Religion is a social institution found in all societies. However, there are wide variations in the institutional ideas and beliefs from place to place and over time. The common belief across most religions is that there are sacred elements (a god or a pantheon of gods, symbols, artefacts or scriptures/texts) which should govern our lives, as opposed to the profane (ordinary) things of this world. Not all religions believe in a supernatural person – Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism revere great teachers. Religious beliefs generally prescribe ideal behaviours and there is usually some form of collective worship involving rituals and ceremonies, which are believed to impact in some way on an afterlife. The institution of religion, in most societies, has to contend and compete with secular values – practices and behaviours which seek to promote non-religious ideas. However, in a **theocracy** such as Iran education is based on religious

A **theocracy** is a state governed according to the principles of the dominant or established religion.

principles, while in a secular state education could be based on values that promote democracy, cooperation and empathy. Secular values may be similar to those taught by religious schools, but in secular state schools they are not attributed to the beliefs and practices of any particular religion. This shows that non-religious ideas need not be anti-religious.

6.4.1

Historical Context

Religion is the social institution that attempts to answer some of the ‘unanswerable’ questions that members of a society ask about the nature of being, death, the meaning of life, coping with distressing circumstances, the possibilities of a life after death, and a relationship with a supernatural being or life force. All societies have developed religion as a social institution in some way and offer varying explanations for some or all of these questions. The history of religion in the Caribbean, like the history of the family

or education, is largely a story about the struggle between the dominant ideas of the Europeans and those of the colonised peoples. Both change and continuity are evident in this brief, historical description of the social institution of religion in the Caribbean given below.

Through syncretism and hybridisation the subjugated Caribbean peoples, mainly Amerindians and Africans, recreated the social institution of religion. The act of conversion is an interpretive one and subject peoples, while adopting the religion of the Europeans, hybridised many of its forms and practices with their own traditions and creations. This began under slavery and has continued to the present day. You will learn more about these later in this chapter.

Research mini-project

Conduct independent research to find out what the major religious denominations are in a Caribbean country of your choice. Organise the information in a table showing percentages of the population in different religions. What are the major patterns evident?

Caribbean people did accept Christianity, one of the major religions of Europe, either in its Roman Catholic form or one of the smaller Protestant denominations who sent their missionaries later (see §6.4.2 below), so that varieties of Christianity are deeply entrenched. Each country has a different heritage of ideas about religion – for example, in countries where the Spanish and French were dominant (the Hispanic Caribbean, together with Trinidad, Grenada, St Lucia, St Vincent, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Dominica and Belize) the Roman Catholic Church has the greatest following. In other countries a combination of Protestant denominations is dominant, the pattern differing in each territory.

6.4.2 Varieties of Christianity

The first European religion brought to the New World was Roman Catholicism. Not only Spain but virtually all of Europe was Roman Catholic at the start of the fifteenth century. However, events in England during the reign of Henry VIII (1491–1547) prompted a breakaway movement and the founding of the Anglican Church (the Church of England) with the monarch rather than the Pope as the head. This is the dominant religion in England today (sometimes referred to as the ‘established’ church). Continuing criticism of the Roman Catholic Church in Europe led to a movement known as the Reformation and many other **Protestant** churches

A **Protestant** is a Christian who rejects the authority of the Roman Catholic Church.

came into being. Although its origins were slightly different, Anglicanism is classed as a Protestant religion.

In England non-Anglican groups were known as Dissenters as they did not approve of (dissented from) the monarch being head of the Church or the beliefs and practices of the Anglican Church. These **Nonconformist**

Nonconformists were so called because they did not conform to the established church.

denominations preferred a simpler, less hierarchical structure to their church. They often worshipped in small churches known as *chapels*, and were called ‘chapelgoers’ because of this. Nonconformist denominations include the Presbyterians, Methodists, Calvinists, Baptists, Quakers, Moravians, Episcopalians and Unitarians, among others. These groups are all Protestant.

In the aftermath of Emancipation there was a full flowering of syncretic religions that first had their genesis under slavery – Myal, Revivalism, Pocomania, Santería and others, as well as more distinctive African forms such as Shango and Vodun (§ 8.2.7). Grassroots religions were strong but their practice made the colonial authorities uneasy. The loud bell-ringing and preaching of the Spiritual (or Shaker) Baptists were believed to be ways of invoking obeah (the occult), long outlawed in the colonies because of its association with slave resistance. Laws were passed forbidding Spiritual Baptist ceremonies in Trinidad, and in St Vincent the Anti-Shaker Ordinance of 1912 allowed the authorities to invade and break up Shaker ceremonies and imprison its members. The institution of religion, then, has always held strong resistant elements that were opposed to colonialism. Under the outer guise of a Christian religion, Africans resisted European mainstream beliefs and world views by celebrating life and death with drumming, singing, chanting, shouting and invoking the spirit world. They took religion out of the churches into places they considered sacred near rivers, in the forests and by the sea. The theme of resistance was so strong that the Spiritual Baptists never dwindled in membership; today in Trinidad and Tobago, Spiritual Baptist Liberation Day (30 March) is a national holiday.

Resistance also created another distinctive world view in the form of a grassroots religion, Rastafari, formed in the 1930s in Jamaica (Box 8.3). Today the followers of syncretic faiths and African religions tend to be predominantly those of the lower socioeconomic

classes, showing the tendency of the poorer sectors of the community to find meaning, comfort and solace in religions that are alternatives to those of the upper classes.

In the nineteenth century the influx of indentured labour brought many thousands of Hindus to Trinidad, Guyana and Suriname. In Trinidad the Hindus belong to different organisational sets such as the Sanatan Dharma, the Arya Samaj, the Kabir Panth Associations and others, all of whom own schools today. Many Hindus converted to Presbyterianism owing to the efforts of the Canadian Mission, who went as missionaries into the sugar estates in the nineteenth century and founded primary and secondary schools as well as a teachers' college. They offered a route to social mobility and a profession based on becoming Christian. One of the institutional ideas here was that Christianity could be an asset in 'bettering yourself', especially if your parents were illiterate immigrant workers speaking a foreign language. Later on, by the 1930s, there was opposition from Hindu and Muslim organisations, which criticised the Canadian Mission for taking advantage of a natural desire to achieve social mobility by 'forcing' people to adopt Christianity.

Muslims, in much smaller numbers than Hindus, were also imported from the Indian subcontinent as indentured labourers. While some were converted by the Canadian Mission, they have maintained a vibrant presence, largely through the founding of primary and secondary schools. Today, this traditional Indian Muslim community is being widened to include African converts, forming black Muslim groups. The Muslim community in Trinidad is fractured into several organisations, all of whom, like the Hindus, own and manage schools – the Anjuman Sunnat-ul-Jamaat (ASJA), the Trinidad Muslim League (TML), the Tackveeact ul Islamic Association (TIA) and the Jamaat-al-Muslimeen (a black Muslim group, responsible for the 1990 uprising). As a result of the militancy of the black Muslims and other fundamentalist Islamic groups, the Muslim community now receives national attention in Trinidad and Tobago out of all proportion to its numbers (5.8 per cent of the population).

A surge of religious ideas coming from the US in the latter years of the twentieth century have had an impact on the institution of religion in the Caribbean. Evangelical, Fundamentalist and Pentecostal faiths have been in existence for over a hundred years but today they are drawing more and more converts from Roman Catholicism and from mainstream Protestant or Nonconformist churches. Fundamentalists, a branch

of evangelicals who base their beliefs on a literal interpretation of the Bible, believe that the 'end times' are at hand. Faiths such as the Assemblies of God, the Church of God and Church of the Open Bible therefore emphasise saving souls and being 'born again'. Members participate actively in services and outreach activities and commit to traditional moral codes. Because they tend to be small congregations, there is intense personal contact (engendering solidarity) as they condemn the behaviours of an increasingly secular world.

The Pentecostals believe that the Holy Spirit intervenes in emotional prayer sessions to bring about healing, and communicates through prophecy and 'speaking in tongues'. Fundamentalists, though, are wary of a way of arriving at truth that does not derive from a literal Bible statement. Fundamentalism tends to be attractive to the lower classes because its morally certain position acts as a buffer against the uncertainties of daily living. And Pentecostals too come from the same social class – their religious experience is a deep emotional catharsis insulating them from daily hardship and struggle. While conversion to Fundamentalist and Pentecostal faiths represented resistance to colonialism in the rejection of mainstream Christian churches, all of which have some connection with Britain, today these religions tend to uphold the status quo. Their rejection of the secular world and emphasis on personal morality and salvation call for an inward focus, though some do speak out and try to change public morals and values.

6.4.3 **Impact of Religion on Caribbean Society and Culture**

Religion is influenced by the stratified nature of the society. In the past the upper classes (namely Europeans, coloureds and some Africans) attended mainstream European churches and they continue to do so. 'Dual membership' – formal allegiance to one of the European religions while participating in the rituals and ceremonies of a syncretic or Afro-Christian form such as Pocomania – was more likely among the poorer groups. Today religion continues to be a social class issue – there are some religions (Orisha, Shango, Spiritual Baptists) where few members belong to the elite class. As we have seen, this phenomenon grew out of the development of different religious beliefs in the colonial situation.

Religion, then, impacts on both individuals and social groups, as well as on society itself.

◆ **List some of the purposes of the social institution of religion in society today.**

Individuals

Many individuals experience religion as a comfort, a way to make sense of the world and a means of contact with the spiritual world. However, in some religions, beliefs can be a source of oppression – for example, to individual women. A woman in a mainstream religion such as Roman Catholicism often plays a conservative role where religious laws may affect her reproductive health (e.g. Catholic bans on birth control and abortion). Even in resistance religious movements, such as the Rastafari, a woman is relegated to traditional roles. And in Islam, whether by custom or Koranic law, individual women find that their dress, behaviours and aspirations are prescribed. However, this may be more true in black Muslim communities or fundamental Islamic sects than in the typical Indian Muslim family in the Caribbean, which generally has more relaxed views than those involved in the resurgence of Islam worldwide. The Anglican Church now accepts women priests, as do many of the Nonconformist churches, and in some of the syncretic religions women play an important role as mediums and spiritual leaders.

Groups

Religion can help a group to maintain solidarity and keep its traditions alive in the face of globalising western culture. The Garifuna of Belize continue some of their West African traditions such as the Dugu ceremony or Feasting of the Dead, where they commune with ancestral spirits. This and other practices distinguish them and preserve their cultural uniqueness in a society that is increasingly permeable to North American-based media, ‘televangelism’ and fundamentalist groups such as the Mennonites.

Institutions

What people think is right, fair or just (which informs the justice system) is shaped to a large extent by their religious beliefs. The justice system in most Caribbean countries is based on a secular outworking of a basically Judaeo-Christian morality where right and wrong are influenced by the Ten Commandments. This causes difficulty for those who do not follow a mainstream religion or whose religious beliefs are at odds with mainstream ideas about what is fair and right. For example:

- In an Islamic society capital punishment may be seen as appropriate for more than just unlawful killing, but in Caribbean societies, where capital punishment is only sometimes enforced, Islamic groups may feel that what they believe is right can be imposed only in places where Koranic law prevails.

- Jehovah’s Witnesses refuse blood transfusions even when it may save lives. They are also pacifists, who will not serve in the armed forces.
- The central tenet of the Baha’i faith is that human beings belong to one race and one religion and they are working towards unification in one global society. As a result Baha’is find it extremely complicated to function in mainstream society in a nation-state. Their religious calendar is based on 19 months of 19 days, which fits badly with the normal 12-month calendar. It is also impossible for them to work for 9 of the 11 holy days of the year, or find a way of bringing about one world government.

Another institutional effect of religion is its potential to generate conflict. Peaceful coexistence among the plurality of religions found in Caribbean countries is constantly threatened by those institutional ideas that do not tolerate other religions, or recognise only Christian denominations, or privilege the religion of the elites or dominant groups. There is also diversity within groups where fundamentalist sects and distinct groups (for example the Charismatic Movement in the Roman Catholic faith or Islamists within Islam) seek a ‘purer’ religious life. Even countries that have not been religiously diverse in the past (for example Barbados) are now becoming so, with the latter-day migrations of Indians from India and Guyanese Indians. This diversity and its potential for conflict have prompted the search for some common ground on which the various denominations can communicate. Inter-religious organisations such as the Caribbean Council of Churches have been formed to mediate conflicts and there has been a definite press towards ecumenism.



SUMMARY

Religion has been deeply intertwined in the lives of Caribbean people from the times of our early ancestors, through slavery (when religion was discouraged), to the present day, where a variety of religions flourish. We see ‘living history’ today in how the religions continue to be socially stratified. We also see changes to the social institutions of religion, with more aggressive religious groups gaining converts, but at the same time there is a growing secularisation of the society. These aspects of continuity and change impact Caribbean people at the level of individuals, groups and social institutions.

ACTIVITY 6.3

1. Explain what is meant by 'the social institution of religion'.
2. Describe the characteristics of religion in Caribbean societies.
3. Carry out independent research to distinguish between Eurocentric and Afrocentric syncretic religions. How do these impact differently on society?

6.5**The Justice System**

The social institution known as the justice system is manifested in the political, legal and judicial framework in a country.

- The political framework is based on the idea that citizens entrust power to their representatives to make decisions that defend and uphold their rights, freedoms and interests.
- The legal framework develops a system of laws that are fair to all parties. Enshrined in the **constitution** of a

The **constitution** consists of the overall rules for governing in a particular country, including the freedoms, rights and responsibilities of citizens.

country are the basic rights and freedoms of citizens, the political principles on which the nation-state is built, as well as the powers and rights of governing bodies.

The judiciary implements the laws by ruling on conflicts over rights (see Box 6.5), fairness and justice (under *civil law*), and by sifting the evidence of cases concerning misdemeanour and felony (under *criminal law*) which are brought before them in the law courts (see below). Ideals and beliefs about who is a citizen, and what

BOX 6.5**The idea of rights**

The notion that all human beings have basic rights by virtue of being human has only recently become enshrined in international and national laws. The history of the Caribbean shows us all too well that Europeans did not regard others as having the same rights as they did, and other groups (coloureds, Indians, Africans) did not regard each other as equals. The necessity and urgency of guaranteeing and protecting people's human rights came to international attention during and after the Second World War. This war caused destruction and mayhem on a global scale and was associated with the attempted genocide of the Jews. The United Nations (UN) was created to try to prevent human rights atrocities occurring on such a scale ever again. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) has guided the principle of ensuring justice for individuals and groups by guaranteeing them certain basic rights ever since.

Most Caribbean countries have patterned their constitutions at independence on recognising the basic human rights described in the UDHR. These include the right to protection from violence, to freedom of belief and assembly, to vote and run for public office and to be equal before the law. There are also economic and social (or welfare) rights such as equality for certain vulnerable groups (women, children and minorities), full access to employment opportunities for all groups, guaranteed safety

at the workplace, freedom to participate in trade unions and collective bargaining, eligibility for social assistance and the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living, health care and education. The justice system has accepted these as rights that must be preserved. Protecting these rights is seen as just and fair.

The protection of human rights is also an issue of social stability. History shows us that when people are treated unjustly and unfairly, the usual consequence is resistance, violence and social and economic dislocation. Caribbean history includes centuries of oppression, genocide, rebellions, revolutions and resistance at all levels. Guaranteeing previously oppressed groups their basic human rights is one way to maintain peace and stability. However, it is one thing to enshrine human rights in the constitution, quite another to protect and preserve these rights in daily social interaction. Where conflicts occur it is the responsibility of the political directorate and its legal arm – the judiciary – to uphold the constitution. If this does not happen, escalating crime, civil unrest and disturbances are likely to occur. One way of understanding the increasing incidence of crime in Caribbean countries is to investigate the extent to which those who suffer from social inequalities are also the ones who tend to be involved in criminal activities.

is fair to whom, have changed over time. And although the constitution of a country guarantees our basic rights today, other ideas and beliefs that also comprise the justice system continue to entrench inequities, discrimination and injustice. So, as in all other social institutions, there are dominant, alternative and dissenting ideas and beliefs.

6.5.1 How the Justice System Works

The police

The part of the justice system that impinges most directly on ordinary citizens is the police force. Each country has developed its own system of policing, which makes it difficult to generalise across even the Anglophone Caribbean.

Many of the top officers in the police force throughout the Caribbean were either British or trained in Britain. They were a part of the colonial policing machinery of the British Empire and their remit was to uphold the status quo. In societies that were rigidly stratified by race and colour, the police developed into a coercive force operating with a significant lack of accountability towards the native population, and this was supported by those in authority. In fact, the term police *service* is still not widespread, *force* being preferred, and *Royal* continues to connect the police today in the Caribbean to their British, and largely military, origins (Table 6.2).

While British officers returned to Britain during the decolonisation era, training continued to be based on the Irish Constabulary model, as in Jamaica (Box 6.6). As an

BOX 6.6

Policing in Jamaica

Jamaica in the early years of the colony had a rudimentary security system based on the parish constables of eighteenth-century Britain. This was an attempt to maintain law and order and protect Britain's property, people and culture abroad. Later, the British Government and the white planter class saw Emancipation in 1834 as a potential threat to the stability of the society. So, an Inspector General was appointed in 1835 and the force was improved. However, they could not contain the events of 1865 when the Morant Bay Rebellion highlighted the need for a more comprehensive security system for the island. As a result the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) was formally established in 1865 and was modelled on the Royal Irish Constabulary. It was heavily armed and had a strong military character, particularly oppressive to the black and poorer elements of the society. Ireland was a colony of Britain, like Jamaica (and one where there was frequent turbulence and political agitation), so that to the British Government it seemed logical to use this model. At home Britain used another system of policing, based on minimal force, backed up (rarely) by the use of soldiers.

Table 6.2 Police organisations in the Caribbean

Country	Police organisation
Jamaica	Jamaica Constabulary Force
Barbados	Royal Police Force of Barbados
Grenada	Royal Grenada Police Force
St Lucia	Royal St Lucia Police Force
St Vincent	Royal St Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force
Antigua and Barbuda	Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda
Guyana	Guyana Police Force
Belize	Belize Police Department
Dominica	Dominica Police Force
Trinidad and Tobago	Trinidad and Tobago Police Service

arm of the justice system, the police in the Caribbean during the independence period became even more militarised in the face of serious gun crimes and narcotics traffic through the region. Some countries developed paramilitary units to deal with such criminal offences, and because of the large number of killings by police some were disbanded. We have witnessed the rise of the warrior cop, routine police brutality and police themselves becoming involved in crime. The current rhetoric on **community policing** represents a paradigm

Community policing involves the police winning the trust of the communities in which they work, often with individual officers assigned to a particular community.

shift for the police because of the long history of socialisation into an authoritarian model of control.

Today, the police system in each Caribbean country is under heavy scrutiny as a vital part of the justice system. Police rhetoric speaks of reform and community servicing and a friendlier image, but citizens continue to be wary. It must be noted too that with the high levels of

serious crime being experienced in the larger Caribbean territories, the police are handicapped by their own outdated procedures and technology. Criminals often have the edge where that is concerned and consequently their apprehending rate is low – another reason for the public to have little confidence in the police.

The law courts

In most Caribbean countries there is a higher and lower judiciary, though the system varies to a certain extent from one Caribbean country to another. A typical structure is shown in Fig. 6.2.

- In most countries the **lower judiciary** consists of the magistrates, collectively known as the magistracy. They preside over the Magistrates' Court (sometimes called Petty Sessions). Magistrates decide which cases should be sent for trial in the High Court. They usually deal with minor criminal and civil cases themselves and send more serious cases to the High Court.
- The **higher judiciary** consists of judges sitting in the Supreme Court. This may combine the High Court and the Court of Appeal, or these may be separate, depending on the territory. The High Court holds trials by jury in criminal cases as well as more serious civil cases. In the case of disputed verdicts the Court of Appeal decides whether the law has been interpreted correctly.
- The final and highest court of appeal, for most Caribbean countries, is still the Privy Council in Westminster, England, but in future this function may be transferred to the **Caribbean Court of Justice** (Box 6.7), where CARICOM members choose to do so.

There are also specialist courts, such as the Family Court dealing with divorce and domestic violence, among other matters, often including juvenile delinquency.

BOX 6.7

The Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ)

The Caribbean Court of Justice was first proposed in 1970 by Jamaica, but was not properly established until 2001, when an agreement was signed by most CARICOM countries. Its headquarters are in Trinidad. The CCJ acts as the final court of appeal for cases brought under regional law arising from the Treaty of Chaguaramas. It deals at present with cases related to regional integration, and to CARICOM in particular, and has been involved in the setting up of the CSME. But in future it is hoped that the court will be able to judge appeals in both civil and criminal cases in the jurisdiction of CARICOM members who have signed the agreement.

Correction

The purpose of the **correction system** is to punish those who break the law and if possible to **rehabilitate**

The **correction system** refers to the final stage of the criminal justice system, where someone guilty of an offence is sentenced by a court of law.

Rehabilitation means restoring someone to normal life.

them into normal life at the end of their sentence.

Sentencing is based on the seriousness of the crime and there are many treatment and punishment options.

- For lesser crimes a person may be given a suspended sentence, probation, a fine or may be required to undergo some form of treatment or take part in community service.

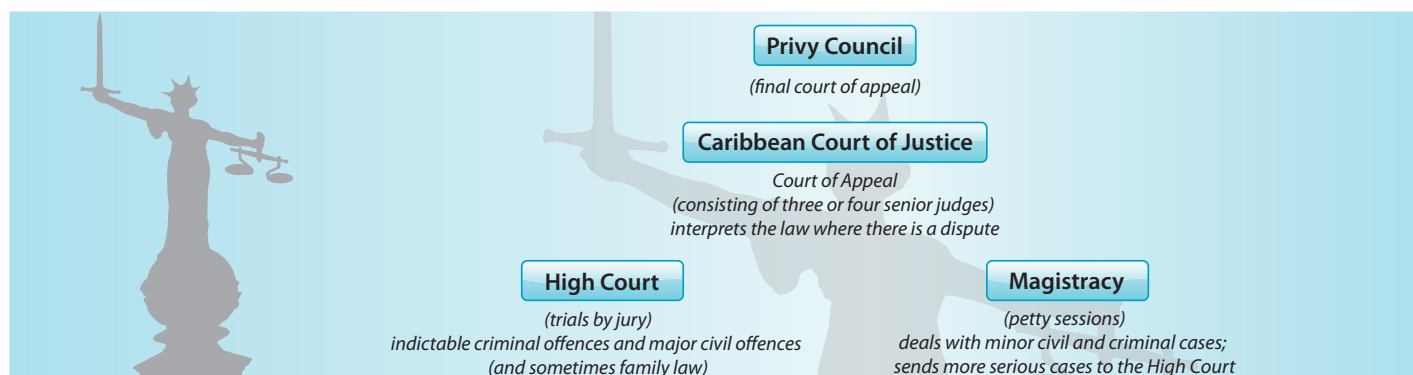


Fig. 6.2 A typical Caribbean judiciary system

- Where more serious crimes occur, young offenders especially may be sentenced to a stay at a youth camp, halfway house or a home which seeks to 'hold' and rehabilitate individuals until they can be released into society. The adult population may be sentenced to mental institutions and prisons as well as corporal or capital punishment.
- Incarceration and capital punishment are the strongest corrections measures meted out by the justice system of a country.

Today there is an emphasis on reducing the prison population and so for lesser offences it is more common that fines and some sort of service to the community are ordered.

Society enacts laws and puts procedures in place to maintain social control and punish deviants. Punishment has several purposes but there may be more emphasis on one rather than another in the correction system in various countries. The purposes of punishment include:

- **retribution** – 'an eye for an eye' or revenge;
- **deterrence** – to serve as a form of prevention for others in society;
- **incapacitation** – to remove offenders/deviants from the general population;
- **rehabilitation** – prison could be a time for reflection and contrition and motivate the inmate towards reform.

It can be said that the first three purposes listed above appear to be more important than the fourth in the system of corrections in the Caribbean. The crowded conditions of prisons, and the violence between inmates themselves and between inmates and guards, ensure that prisoners adopt a survivalist or 'dog-eat-dog' mode of accommodating to their daily life. They therefore leave prison in no way better than they came in; indeed, sometimes the influences there have made them worse, so that there is a high rate of **recidivism**.

Recidivism refers to the tendency of criminals to continue to offend after their release from prison.

In the Caribbean, where there has been a history of rigid social and ethnic stratification and oppression of the poor, as well as an authoritarian and militaristic police force upholding the status quo, the corrections facilities house a high percentage of poor black men. They are the ones whom the police routinely apprehend for violent and other offences. The perception of the nature of crime is significant here – white-collar crimes which cost taxpayers millions of dollars and threaten the life savings of many often go unresolved, even if reported. The idea of violence induces fear and so the partnership of the



Fig. 6.3 Judges and lawyers, Bahamas

police, the media and the elites results in demonising the young men who commit violent crime. The correction system in many Caribbean countries is therefore skewed towards treating the poor as criminals; those with power and resources often escape unscathed.

Reform of the correctional services

Like the police services, the correctional services, including juvenile corrections, are in need of modernisation. It has been suggested that states should initiate steps towards appropriate policies for reform and modernisation of prisons in order to reduce the rate of recidivism, and should examine alternatives to imprisonment. Judith Soares (2009), for example, puts it this way:

To this end, we argue that in these societies, divided as they are by race, class and sex/gender, the law and the criminal justice system is the will of the ruling class or the state. As such, they exist to protect their interests, to keep them in power and to maintain hegemony. At the same time, they act as a means of social control for all those marginalised and disadvantaged social groups such as the poor, 'non-white' peoples, Blacks and women. (p 1)

The birth of the modern prison is traced by Foucault (1995) in his examination of discipline and punishment in the West. In this analysis, Foucault notes the strong influence of a location's general environment on its criminal justice system. He explains, for instance, that industrial interests paired with Enlightenment-era ideas led to the creation of the French penal code of 1810. While some of the original goals of this instrumental code were to make punishment less arbitrary and to act as a form of deterrence against law-breaking, he notes that

prison soon became a preferred method for dealing with a variety of offences. In Foucault's opinion, this coercive, corporal, solitary form of punishment was chosen over a more representative, signifying and collective form of punishment because the former was much more amenable to elites than was the latter. That is, those with influence could directly benefit from the imprisonment of those with less power. And, in fact, members of the elite have become so effective at promoting incarceration that Foucault eventually came to see prisons as being immovable, natural-seeming fortresses which can only be changed, never removed.

In sum, and as Foucault contends, it appears that capitalism has been instrumental within the western criminal justice system (CJS). That is, the influence of those with power and moneyed interests has greatly impacted on how we approach corrections. The crime control industry is but a clear example of the merging between punishment and profit. If anything, then, the development of the western CJS over the past four centuries shows itself to be a testament to the power held by capitalism and capitalist elites in western society.

 **If this is true, what does this mean for the supposed fairness of our criminal justice system? Does capitalism really play the most important role? What other factors may matter? What do you think?**

6.5.2 The Historical Context

The justice system in the Caribbean evolved out of a history of colonialism, resistance and independence. The Europeans came as conquerors and this shaped the dominant ideas about rights in the society. As captives, the native peoples were treated so harshly that two Spanish priests, Montesinos and Las Casas, sought help from the Crown for their protection. In 1512 the Laws of Burgos allowed for the encomienda system but also made provisions for the indigenes to be fairly treated and converted to Christianity.

These rights were virtually ignored by the Spanish colonists, largely because they were far away from the seat of empire in Spain, and the political and judicial systems in the colonies were based on the dominant idea of the native as an enslaved person. Rather it was the Spanish monarchs, the Dominican friars and certain intellectuals in Spain who held alternative views of the indigenous inhabitants as persons with rights. Thus, laws may exist but if the people in power do not believe that those laws are in their own interests, then they are not likely to be enforced.

Similarly, under slavery African people did not have any rights; they were 'chattels' or property, and Europeans, by virtue of being white, were responsible for them and held all power over them. In the Spanish colonies the Siete Partidas and in the French colonies the Code Noir each laid down laws relating to the enslaved population, but these were mainly concerned with the conditions of being a slave, and the punishments that were to be meted out for different crimes, including trying to escape. There were provisions made for housing, clothing and feeding the slaves but this was largely left up to the good judgement of the owners. In the British colonies the Assemblies, made up of the planter class, enacted laws to control, subdue and coerce the slaves. Whether or not legal codes existed, the rights of the enslaved were not protected because, again, the dominant ideas of the period saw the African as an inferior being to the European. What was regarded as 'justice' or 'fairness' did not extend to the African population. In fact, the judicial system sought to uphold the rights and privileges of the planter class.

In this case the political, legal and judicial systems were in close agreement. The very social fabric depended on this solidarity. The prosperity of the planters and the sugar-producing colonies was heavily dependent on enslaved labour. There would be strong sanctions against any person or group attempting to introduce alternative ideas about freedom, or even education, for Africans. The system of social stratification reflected rigid distinctions between blacks, coloureds and whites, reinforcing the dominant idea and beliefs on which the political, legal and judicial systems depended.

However, there were always alternative ideas and resistance movements that could threaten the stability of the colonies. Religious groups, particularly Nonconformist missionaries, sought to woo the planters into giving the Africans some religious instruction and the rudiments of reading and writing. They were largely unsuccessful during slavery but afterwards, while still within a rigidly stratified colonial society, the Baptists (particularly in Jamaica and Guyana) led protests for better living and working conditions. Along with the Quakers, Moravians and Methodists, they were bent on restoring some of their human rights to the African population, rights that apparently did not come with them being declared 'free' (though the idea of human rights as such did not at that point exist). The ideas which led to Emancipation and which became enshrined as law had not appreciably modified the political or judicial systems in the colonies because the planter class still saw the Africans as inferior beings.

The watchwords of the French Revolution of 1789 – liberty, equality and fraternity – spread throughout the Caribbean, particularly the Francophone Caribbean, providing another set of alternative ideas in the justice system. In St Domingue (later Haiti) the Free Coloureds and enslaved Africans mobilised to fight for freedom, resulting in the 1791 Haitian Revolution (see Box 2.13) and the establishment of the first independent country in the Caribbean, the Black Republic of Haiti (1804). Political upheaval in France provided the background of confusion as well as the powerful ideas about freedom that disrupted the tight link between the political, legal and judicial systems in Haiti at the time. A succession of black and mulatto leaders in Haiti enacted laws guaranteeing the freedom and equality of all citizens regardless of colour, race or condition. The justice system was now grounded in overturning prejudices based on white supremacy, but it still, ironically enough, tended to privilege the coloureds (*gens du couleur*) over the black masses. The militaristic footing on which the society was organised after 1804 in order to preserve the revolution also contributed to the rise of a number of dictators. The rights of the Haitian people, despite being enshrined in law, were ignored by the political elite, who controlled the judiciary. The justice system came to be dominated by fear and intimidation – very similar to the situation in the Caribbean under slavery and colonialism.

6.5.3 Justice and Injustice

Today in the Caribbean the justice system is based on a country's constitution and the political regimes through which the people are represented, and through which their rights are actually preserved. For the most part these are democratic organisations and practices. However, the political elites tend to wield tight control of the legal and judicial systems, so much so that lower socioeconomic groups and other ethnic groups feel excluded.

For example, in the justice system of multiracial Caribbean countries, particularly Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad, political parties for the most part are based on racial affiliation. The supporters of the party in power and their detractors are locked in a perpetual debate about the wisdom of either one forming a government. This conflict cannot be resolved because it is based on discriminatory ideas about race. The political party in power tends to choose from among its own ranks to fill important posts and thus decisions about what is fair, right and just are sometimes made (or perceived to be made) based on racial characteristics. In other Caribbean countries where there may not be racial tensions, schisms along other faultlines may be no less deep. Skin colour,

social class and traditional political allegiance are points of reference in awarding jobs, rewards and responsibilities.

Commentators on this state of affairs in the Caribbean have tried to show that while we have inherited political, legal and judicial systems from Britain, we do not necessarily 'work' them as democratic systems. From the adjustments made to constituency boundaries, the drawing up of electoral lists and the planning of political campaigns, to procedures for elections and voting, there are major elements of fraud and irregular practices. Thus, we have inherited or adopted a centuries-old justice system from abroad, but how we administer justice differs from the rhetoric of the system. The administration of justice may depart from what is fair, right and just to what is good for the party in power, the supporters of the party and perhaps business interests. The many complaints from individuals about their experiences in the political, legal and judicial systems usually centre on unfair treatment; for example, a harsher justice meted out to the poor and the powerless in the society.

In the Anglophone Caribbean, Emancipation occurred between 1834 and 1838, a period known as **Apprenticeship** (Box 6.8). The coloureds and blacks gradually won some representation in the colonial Assemblies, though the dominant ideas continued to privilege the British elites. At Independence, most Caribbean countries adopted some variant of the **Westminster system** of government. To attain political

The Westminster system of government is that based on the British Parliament in Westminster, with its two Houses and its one-person-one-vote electoral system.

freedom we sought to remove ourselves from British control, but as independent countries our political, legal and judicial systems are based on British custom and practice. While that is not necessarily a negative comment, the debate about whether the Caribbean Court of Justice as court of appeal can deliver as fair and as just decisions as the (British) Privy Council has done

BOX 6.8

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship is the name given to the period when freedom for slaves was introduced gradually in the British Caribbean, though it was not implemented in all territories. It was originally supposed to end in 1840 for field slaves, but came to an end prematurely because of the threat of unrest.

in the past shows the continuing ambivalence with which we regard European versus local creations. As we have seen, some believe that while we have adopted the outer trappings of the British system of justice, we ‘work’ it in the interests of political parties and certain ethnic groups.

The evolution of the justice system in the Caribbean shows strong commitment to the ideal of ensuring basic human rights for the mass of the people – freedom of expression, of assembly, to own and protect private property, to vote and run for public office, together with the right to a fair trial and a basic level of social and economic welfare. Yet Caribbean societies continue to be stratified according to race, colour and ethnicity in ways that are very reminiscent of colonial society. Social stratification implies that those in the lower socioeconomic groups, and who outnumber people in other income brackets, are not benefiting from the rights and freedoms enshrined in the constitution, compared with other groups. There are therefore entrenched inequities in the justice system that the transition from Emancipation to Independence has not been able to address meaningfully.

According to sociology, through socialisation our values, norms and behaviours become prescribed for us when growing up. These values, norms and behaviours eventually form a ‘world view’, or an understanding of what is real or what is valuable, and we use these ideas and beliefs to judge others. Some sociologists see the justice system as important in preserving social order or social stability. Thus, being fair and equitable in our dealings with each other should ensure that discontent is minimised in the society. The problem with this view is that it tries to ‘tack on’ fair and just practices to a system with entrenched inequalities. Poverty is a good example. One way of addressing this problem is to provide ‘safety nets’ for the poor – free health care, school books, meals and transport for schoolchildren. However, these legal entitlements cannot change the face of poverty. Political power continues to reside with the elites and the poor are the ones most often incarcerated by the judicial system.

Marxists begin with the view that capitalism stratifies the population according to those who own the means of production and those who only have their labour to sell. The surplus value that capitalists acquire as a result of exploiting this labour widens the social and economic gap between the groups. Those who wield power in the economy are also the groups whose ideas, beliefs and interests are dominant in society. For example, wealthy people or those with power in the society, and their relatives, seldom receive the full brunt of the law when caught doing wrong. They are able to pay for the most expensive legal help and sometimes the police are

intimidated by their rich and powerful captives to the point where they may be given special privileges. Not so the poor. In this view, then, the poor have rights equal to those of the rich for equity before the justice system, but that seldom occurs because the poor are for the most part without power in capitalist societies.

Other sociologists study microlevel processes of human interaction, including the perspectives of people as they act out on a daily basis the ideas and beliefs they have about the justice system in which they live. If they are victims of a crime they may not call the authorities if they believe that the police are reluctant to venture into their neighbourhood. They may think that their rights are being denied them because of where they live (and this most often means poor neighbourhoods).

Some believe that the justice system is gendered, with a bias against women. For example, females who are victims of sexual abuse often cannot face involving the criminal justice system because of the judgemental, insensitive and sometimes sceptical attitudes of the officials they meet. If the justice system is ‘gendered’ in this way then clearly the rights of these women are not being preserved and protected.

6.5.4

Impact of the Justice System on Caribbean Society and Culture

We have inherited dominant ideas from European systems of justice and merged them with our own ideas of rights earned through resistance and opposition, as well as our understanding of the cultural diversity found among Caribbean people. Our constitutions therefore reflect the ideals we have for justice. However, these ideas impact upon us in different ways, according to our social location, for example whether we come from a privileged background or a poor one, or whether we have ourselves achieved wealth and status.

Individuals

An example of the way the law accommodates itself to cultural differences is that it actually protects an individual’s right to have several wives if it is his religious custom (e.g. within Islam), though he may only register one such marriage legally. This then becomes **customary law** and individuals find that the justice system affects them differently according to whether they follow **statute laws** or customary laws. Individuals may also

Customary laws are based on customs within societies or communities.

Statute laws are enacted through legislation.

find that their rights to wear the hijab or dreadlocks to school are upheld by the legal system though not necessarily by the educational institution they attend. At the same time, the law does not uphold a female's right to exercise personal choice about having an abortion – in almost all Caribbean jurisdictions (though not everywhere in the world) it is an illegal act. In this case, the law sees itself as the guardian of the rights of the unborn, though some theorists think it should be a matter of the woman's own choice.

Groups

In our constitutions, which contain our fundamental law, young people are subject to certain restrictions based on age. Below the age of 18 a person is a minor and the responsibility of someone else, and he or she cannot vote (or in some jurisdictions drive a motor vehicle). There are also laws and conventions that protect the rights of minors, for example the Convention on the Rights of the Child (see below) and the age of sexual consent. These restrictions and special provisions for protection are based on dominant ideas in the justice system, namely that before the age of 18 young persons are not mature and responsible enough to make good decisions about citizenship and personal well-being.

The system of compulsory retirement at age 65 is another way that some jurisdictions use age to legally discriminate between different groups. Not only is retirement seen as just and fair for the elderly who have worked all their lives, but it also allows young, newly qualified persons to be able to find jobs, which can only happen if an age ceiling is put on employment. Increasingly there are calls to discontinue this practice, because experienced and mature people, who have much to contribute, are being shunted out of their jobs not because of failing health, but because they have attained a certain number of years, a policy arising from an attitude known as **ageism** which is deeply entrenched in

Ageism refers to any discriminatory practice based on age.

the dominant ideas of the social institution of justice.

As the demographic of populations becomes older, and there are fewer young people to take up their jobs, as is already happening in many developed countries, and is beginning to happen in the Caribbean (Palloni, Pinto-Aguirre & Palaez, 2002), the compulsory age of retirement may well rise.

 **Suggest ONE way of ensuring more jobs for young people, other than the compulsory retirement of older people.**

Institutions

Today domestic crimes such as abuse, violence and harassment, even among close family members, are accepted in court as valid claims for justice. This has come about because of the need to protect and preserve the rights of women in families dominated by patriarchy. However, we are tending to see a pattern where the legal and judicial frameworks devised to assist women in abusive relationships are now being manipulated by women against men. For example, in the Family Court it tends to be the norm that women are routinely awarded child custody and child support laws are strictly enforced, even when the father is unable to pay, resulting in jail time. There is also an unwillingness now to oppose or dismiss women's allegations because it is not deemed 'politically correct'. In its attempts to ensure fairness between the genders in the family, it can thus be argued that the justice system has to some extent succeeded in perpetuating stereotypes and myths of both women and men.

Caribbean countries have become signatories to international conventions, declarations and treaties, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979). This necessitates enacting national legislation to prohibit discriminatory practices and uphold human rights, and to allow international bodies to scrutinise and criticise our level of compliance. The reports of international organisations, such as the Human Rights Committee and Amnesty International, publicly state a country's track record in upholding basic human rights and the civil and economic rights of its citizens. The social institution of justice, then, is enmeshed in international discussions of what is right, fair and just, and this brings the Caribbean closer to norms being observed across the world about the state's responsibilities to its citizens. Thus, while discriminatory practices and exclusion continue to be strongly entrenched in Caribbean societies, there are competing ideas about the nature of justice. The political, legal and judicial systems are increasingly being called upon to adjudicate in conflicts between these competing ideas about 'rights'.

ACTIVITY 6.4

1. Describe TWO ways in which the justice system impacts on each of the following in the society and culture of your own country: (a) individuals; (b) groups; (c) institutions.
2. Are these the same as or different from the impacts noted above for the general Caribbean situation?

SUMMARY

The justice system in the Caribbean evolved out of a history of oppression, the rights of members of society being won through violence, legal battles and the dismantling of colonialism. However, the development of fairness and justice in the political, legal and judicial systems has been influenced by the socially stratified nature of the society that has served to entrench discriminatory practices. Today these dominant ideas are competing against powerful global commitments calling for safety nets for the poor, a more inclusive education system and a reduction in all forms of discrimination. The social institution of the justice system is now the arena where dominant ideas that have long been entrenched by the powerful political elite and their supporters struggle with alternative ideas that are being pushed by international human rights organisations and their local adherents.

Wrap Up

Social institutions in the Caribbean, such as the family, education, religion and the justice system, reflect strongly entrenched ideas we have as a society about how to rear children and teach them, how to think about our relationship to the divine and how to develop fair and just systems. All these institutions have undergone changes over time in the development from colonial to independent countries. While the dominant ideas within each social institution became concrete as social organisations, there continue to be marginal and less popular ideas that challenge the status quo.

Research TOPICS

Issue: Investigating the impact of a social institution on Caribbean people

You will have to name the specific institution you are studying. For example, you might choose the institution of the family and want to examine the issue of family form or family composition for Caribbean people. What are their beliefs and practices? Do they have biases that may help us to better understand the social institution of the family?

Methodology: A survey employing a questionnaire (to about 40 persons) would be suitable. Administering a questionnaire to many persons helps you to present your findings in a range of formats – tables, graphs, percentages. Family type and form may be a sensitive issue to some people, so you need to word your questions carefully. What is important is how people feel and how they label their family type. If this does not conform to your definitions, you will have to be silent about it, and raise it in your discussion of findings.

Possible research questions:

1. How would you describe your family type?
2. How has your family composition changed over the past ten years?
3. How is your family composition likely to change in the next ten years?
4. What kinds of family types did your parents or guardians have?
5. What kind of family type would you like to have? Why?

These questions will yield **quantitative data** for constructing graphs as well as **qualitative data** (see Chapters 17 and 18 for more on these distinctions) on beliefs about changes and continuity in the family, historical information on the family and perhaps biased beliefs as to an ideal family form.

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Structured response

- 1 (a) Identify FOUR different family forms found in the Caribbean region. (4 marks)
- (b) Outline ONE of the major functions of the family that is found in all societies. (2 marks)
- 2 (a) Describe TWO examples of continuity in the institution of the family. (4 marks)
- (b) Account for ONE of these examples of continuity using examples from family situations with which you are familiar. (2 marks)
- 3 (a) Describe TWO important social functions performed by the institution of education. (4 marks)
- (b) Explain how the institution of education interacts with the institution of the family in ONE of these functions. (2 marks)
- 4 (a) State TWO ways in which religion impacts on education in the Caribbean. (2 marks)
- (b) Outline TWO ways in which secular values may conflict with a religious ethos of education. (4 marks)
- 5 (a) Identify TWO ways in which members of a religion may be discriminated against because of the practices and beliefs of their religion. (2 marks)
- (b) Suggest reasons for the examples of discrimination mentioned above. (4 marks)
- 6 (a) Describe what is meant by the 'justice system' in a country. (2 marks)
- (b) Account for TWO influences on the development of the justice system in the Caribbean. (4 marks)
- 7 (a) Define the term 'social stratification'. (2 marks)
- (b) Explain how social stratification impacts on the justice system in today's Caribbean. (4 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Outline the ways in which changes in the institution of education have impacted Caribbean people over time.
- 2 Explain the influence of patriarchy on Caribbean families.
- 3 Illustrate how the justice system interacts with other social institutions in Caribbean society and culture.

Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 'In Caribbean society and culture the nuclear family is the ideal type of family, especially in terms of bringing up children.' Critically examine this argument in the light of social conditions in a named Caribbean country.
- 3 'While the social institution of education in the Caribbean contributes to social mobility, it has not been able to help the poor to improve their lives.' Discuss.
- 4 To what extent is religion in Caribbean society and culture influenced by social stratification?

Answers to Activity 6.1: 1 (B), 2 (E), 3 (A), 4 (F), 5 (C) and 6 (D).

7

Caribbean Arts and Popular Culture in the Region and its Diaspora



Carnival in Port of Spain, Trinidad

The concept of ‘arts’ is a contested one. Some theorists would include everything from traditional paintings and sculptures to performance and installation art forms, and recognise popular music and cultural festivals as coming under the umbrella of the arts, while others would draw the line somewhere in between. What is clear is that both here in the Caribbean and in the diaspora cultural expression has been and continues to be an important element in Caribbean identity and vital for the human and cultural development of the region.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. describe the variety of Caribbean art forms, including the visual arts, popular music, festivals and culinary arts;
2. explain how Caribbean art forms inform the culture of the region;
3. outline how the arts influence human and cultural development;
4. state the contributions made by individual creative artists and performers;
5. describe how art forms in the diaspora aid cultural retention.

7.1

Caribbean art forms

The definition of ‘art’ is a contested one (Fig. 7.1). Consider the following questions:

- Is art only a matter of **high culture**, following western models and techniques of drawing, painting and sculpture or classical forms of music and dance such as ballet or orchestral symphonies? Or is **popular culture** included in this definition?

High culture refers to works of art which can be compared with similar works internationally and are generally thought to have great artistic and aesthetic value, though they often do not have mass appeal – e.g., opera, ballet, gallery art and theatre productions.

Popular culture is usually defined as culture which has mass appeal, often contrasted with high culture.

- To what extent can we include regional specialities such as cuisine and culinary practices under the umbrella of ‘the arts’?
- Do performance art or installation art meet the criteria, or are these phenomena too ephemeral?
- Should **artisanal** crafts such as products for the home be viewed as artworks or only as expressions of indigenous or **folk culture**?

Artisanal works are those produced by artisans, working craftspeople who are making artefacts for local sale or display, e.g. in homes.

Folk culture refers to the beliefs and practices of a distinct ethnic group and tends to be tradition-bound and, more often than not, rural in occurrence.

- Where do active celebrations such as festivals fit into the picture? Are they works of art in themselves, since they are cultural expressions, or do they only contain material art such as costumes or decorated floats?

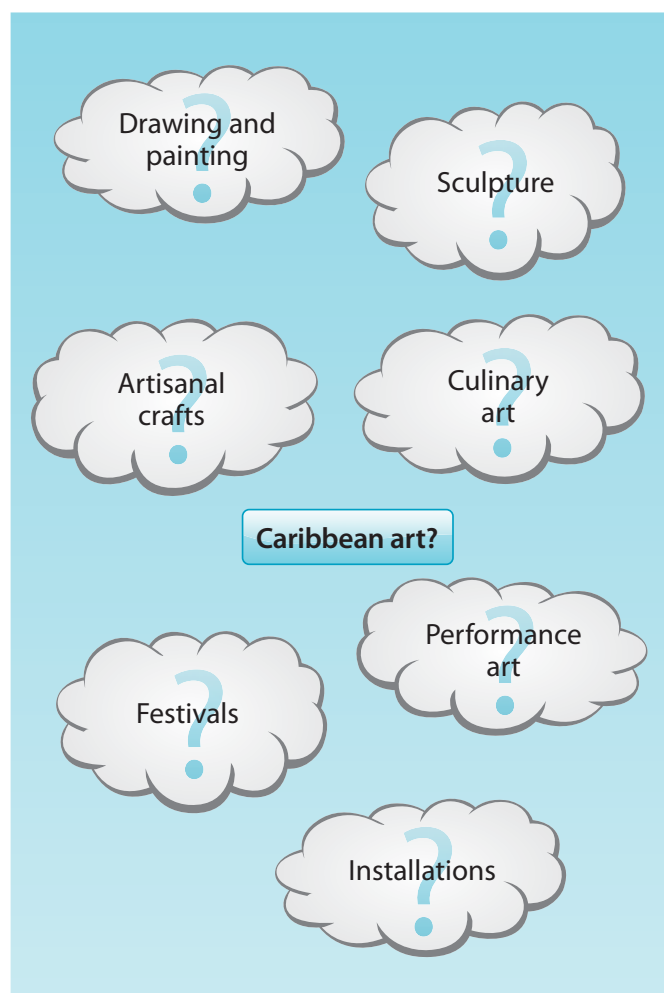


Fig. 7.1 Caribbean art forms

We shall revisit these questions along the way as we look at the many different Caribbean art forms which exist in the region and the diaspora today.

7.1.1 Popular Music and Dance

For such a small area on the globe, the Caribbean is renowned for the varieties of its music. Undoubtedly this has to do with the historical fact that many diverse groups of people either came here or were brought here from elsewhere. They brought with them their traditions, which underwent *syncretic* changes, borrowing and mixing elements yet still emerging as distinctly different musical forms and genres. It is important to realise that the enslaved Africans came from different ancestral groups with varying traditions so that the African influence on music in the Caribbean is pervasive but also extremely varied. For example, in the Anglophone Caribbean we have:

- soca (Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and St Lucia);
- calypso (kaiso), steelband chutney, parang, chutney soca, parang soca, ragga soca, rapso, pichakaree, tambrin (Trinidad and Tobago);
- spouge, ringbang (Barbados);
- marimba, breakdown, punta, punta rock (Belize);

- junkanoo, mento, ska, rock steady, rockers, reggae, roots reggae, lovers rock, dub, nyabinghi, reggaetón, dance hall, reggae fusion, raggamuffin (Jamaica);
- cadance, zouk (St Lucia).

Some of these are also found in non-Anglophone countries, for example zouk and cadence in Martinique and Guadeloupe. Other musical and dance forms include:

- son, rumba, habanera, salsa, timba, plena, merengue, bachata and bomba (Cuba, Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico);
- reggaetón (Puerto Rico);
- compass (or konpa), mizik rasin, rara, twoubadou (Haiti);
- tumba, ritmo kombina (Curaçao);
- kaseko, kawina (Suriname);
- méringue, beguine (Martinique, Guadeloupe).

During colonial times, other popular forms were invented, such as steelband (see Box 7.1) and these have become important both in the region and in the diaspora. Later, as recorded music began to spread across the region and US influence was felt, rap, dancehall and reggae, an amalgam of various different types of folk music

BOX 7.1

Steelband

From the 1880s up to the 1930s in Trinidad, tamboo-bamboo bands accompanied carnival revellers since the authorities had banned drums. In these bands music was produced by beating bamboo cuttings of various widths and lengths with wooden sticks. Experimentation added an assortment of different kinds of disused tins and pans, 'tuned' to produce different musical notes. By the 1940s empty oil drums had become the preferred instrument – the top of the drum was pounded into a concave shape and different notes were tuned on its surface (Fig. 7.2). Whole drums (or 'pans') were used for the bass, and they were cut to different lengths to produce different octaves.

The colonial authorities banned carnival celebrations during the war years but constant experimentation was going on in the backyards of Port of Spain to produce a versatile pan instrument. Even today, although steelpan orchestras play



Fig. 7.2 The face of a steel pan

European-style classical music which is written down and 'scored', many pan players play 'by ear'. This may be because they come from poor backgrounds, or are unemployed, and have never learned to read music.

BOX 7.2

The story of reggae

Today reggae is known worldwide; there are reggae concerts, festivals and bands in such far-flung places as Japan and South Africa. This genre of music came out of Jamaica and although there are many variations of the form, they continue to be known generally as reggae music. The story of reggae is bound up with the history of recorded music in Jamaica. The first kind of music to be recorded in Jamaica was mento in the 1950s. The roots of mento lay in folk music, the drums of pocamania and junkanoo rhythms. The style of music which was exported from the US at this time provided fertile ground for what was to become typical of the Jamaican music scene – constant experimentation and innovation relying on mass appeal to carry the development forward. This happened in the 1960s on the eve of independence, when an exuberant dance music known as ska, influenced by American pop music, began to be recorded and made its way to metropolitan centres where there were significant Jamaican communities. Millie Small's hit *My Boy Lollipop* made ska known internationally.

By the late 1960s ska was a spent force, overtaken first by rock steady and then reggae. Rock steady was slower than ska, influenced by the new soul music of the US, and it emphasised vocals. Like ska, it was associated with a particular dance style. Reggae soon became the dominant and long-lived music genre of Jamaica, capable of fusing with and mutating into many related forms, especially with the adoption of the electric guitar and synthesisers. Reggae was even slower than rock steady, with more emphasis given to the bass and to 'conscious' lyrics – haunting melodies evoking stories and experiences of oppression, longings and yearnings, intertwined with Rastafarian religious themes focusing on Africa as redemption. Bob Marley was the best-known exponent of this form of reggae, which came to be known as 'roots reggae'; *No Woman No Cry* was one of his international hits with which a wide cross section of humanity could identify. It is this deep connection that the world has made with Jamaica and reggae which tends to brand all the music coming out of Jamaica since then as 'reggae'. This strand of reggae continues to be created and is related to the *nyabingi* sound of Rastafarian ceremonies where hand drums and chanting are emphasised.

In Jamaica the owners of sound systems and their DJs (disk jockeys) were central to the culture of innovation and experimentation with the music from as early as the 1950s, when many people did

not own radios. Sound systems are turntables with powerful amplifiers and 'speaker boxes' suitable for holding 'block parties' in urban centres. The DJ or 'selector' was the driving force in winning the loyalty of the crowd to novel ways of pushing the music even further by singing and rapping over it, known as 'toasting'. For example, dub music emerged out of the practice of leaving one side of a record single free of the lead vocals (the 'version'), giving the dub masters room to fill in with their toasting and mixing dexterity. Rap reached the US and flowered into hip hop, showing the strong influences of US and Jamaican music on each other. Dub and reggae continued strongly for most of the 1970s and early 1980s. More sophisticated mixing devices took dub in new directions. Now in the studio DJs and others could take out and put in different elements of the music and manipulate sounds with electronic effects.

Dancehall was born out of this dominance of the DJ in Jamaican music and seemed to be a reaction to the spiritual and 'conscious' themes of reggae as its lyrics became increasingly bawdy. It was a youthful sound which had strong connections to American hip hop; indeed, dancehall, rap and American hip hop seemed to intertwine, constantly influencing each other. The music mutated drastically into raga, with its heavy reliance on computerised and digital sounds. The lyrics moved from being strongly suggestive to 'raw', glorifying sexual conquests, portraying women as sexual objects, denigrating homosexuals and preaching violence. Buju Banton, for example, advocated the killing of gay men and Bounty Killer celebrated gangsterism. Today the excesses of dancehall and raga have been neutralised by the conversion of some of its leading exponents to the Rastafari faith and more 'conscious' lyrics – namely, Capleton, Bubju Banton and Sizzla. More spiritual lyrics are now combined with the energy and verve of the dancehall performance and the style is known as 'culture'.

Reggae music has always been associated with resistance and with the Rastafari (though not all Rastafari identify with the music). One reason for the universal appeal of reggae music is its message of resistance, defiance, overcoming and hope in a better tomorrow – a message with which all persons who are oppressed in some way can identify.

Calypso, too, had grassroots origins. Calypsonians sought to expose inequalities such as racism and political oppression and voiced alternative opinions to that of the establishment about colonial politics and the Roman Catholic Church – an institution

BOX 7.2

The story of reggae (continued)

seen as 'colonial' and a source of oppression, particularly by resistance groups among the lower socioeconomic groups. Their compositions combined biting wit, satire and humour to poke fun at important personages. They portrayed themselves as outspoken critics, unafraid and fearless of the colonial authorities – the Roaring Lion, the Mighty Sniper, Attila the Hun and Growling Tiger. The calypso was a means whereby the poor and powerless could resist and ridicule the highest authorities.

Reggae and its various forms (roots reggae, dancehall, ragamuffin) and calypso and its various forms (soca, ringbang, chutney soca, rapso, raggasoca) evolved in response to the demand from younger generations for musical forms and styles which identified with world youth culture and music. This meant popular music created in extra-regional centres such as North America and Europe. Aspirations of reggae and calypso artistes in the 1960s and 1970s did not necessarily involve having hits in metropolitan centres, but since the massive 'breakthroughs' of the likes of Bob Marley, Third World, Shabba Ranks and others, reggae, dancehall and other forms of Jamaican music are now major contenders on the US, British, European and even Asian music charts and awards. Bob Marley's

Exodus album was voted by *Times Magazine* as the Album of the Century. This extraordinary extra-regional success has been very profitable to the artistes and recording labels and has been responsible for changes in the music, a search for constant experimentation and mutations, as today's artistes look to an international audience for their measure of success. Music is a 'commodity' and the very success of reggae in western countries is impacting on its transformations in many ways, not least of which is that its production, promotion and dissemination are being handled largely by capitalist interests in the western world.

The success of reggae in extra-regional countries has also impacted on the aspirations of soca artistes. Traditional calypsonians continue to sing their social commentaries and humorous renditions on love, marriage, courtship, infidelity and sexual prowess. While these enduring themes are still heard in calypso tents and at live concerts, they are seldom recorded because there is not a large enough market. Soca music, with its driving beat and reliance on the intense involvement of listeners, is more in demand, especially at carnival. The desire to make a 'breakthrough' on the international front involves soca artistes in constant experimentation.

(see Box 7.2), emerged. An indigenous phenomenon, the Garifuna-origin Punta rock from Belize (Box 7.3), made a further contribution to this group of innovative Caribbean musical genres.

Musical forms across the Caribbean have been subject to a steady and ongoing process of creolisation from the very first meeting and mixing of different peoples in the region. The European *jig*, *reel*, *waltz*, *polka* and *mazurka* provided a backdrop for the enslaved, and later the free African population, to adapt and creatively incorporate into their traditional African rhythms, particularly drumming. The *salsa*, *beguine* and *mento* are a few examples of the creolisation of European musical forms. These creative expressions of music played a role in mounting resistance to European culture, especially drumming (see Box 7.4).

In the modern day, every year new forms and sounds spring up, for example:

- sampling (copying a few bars of already produced popular music);
- incorporating rhythm and blues, reggae and rock melodies and styles;
- the use of synthesised rhythms as well as hip hop and rap vocal styles;
- riding a rhythm – where four to eight bars of music are repeated for an entire song, and many different songs (lyrics and melodies) use this same rhythm.

The dilemma for soca artistes, for example, is to satisfy the demands of the home crowd and at the same time to present soca in a more 'palatable' form to extra-regional audiences. Arrow of Montserrat with *Feeling Hot, Hot, Hot*, and more recently Kevin Little of St Vincent and Rupee of Barbados, have been successful in bridging hard-core soca with a more melodious sound, more attuned to the tastes of a non-Caribbean audience. Soca has some similarities with the punta rock of Belize (Box 7.3), yet in some ways is utterly different.

BOX 7.3

Punta rock, Belize

Punta rock has the distinction of being the only music created in Central America and is usually associated with Belize. Both Pen Cayetano of Belize and the Honduran group Góbana are credited with starting this new genre, which includes elements of salsa, reggae, rap and soca, as well as the traditional musical form from which it was born, namely the punta of the Garinagu (Garifuna) people. The latter are found not only in Belize but also in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua on the Caribbean coastlands. The punta mainly used two drums, with a range of percussion instruments – rattles, woodblocks, bottles, maracas (or sisira) and sometimes conch or turtle shells. It was performed mainly at family gatherings, wakes and other religious or cultural events and sung in the Garifuna language. Punta is distinguished from other musical genres by the duple-metre ostinato played on the segunda or bass drum and improvisations in rhythm on the primero (the tenor drum) (Greene, 2004). The songs are mainly of the ‘call-and-response’ kind so typical of African cultures across the Caribbean, with intense drumming.

Migration to metropolitan centres has been ongoing in Belize throughout the twentieth century, so that there was some concern over the possible loss of the Garifuna language and customs, especially on the part of Garifuna youth. The creation of punta rock in the 1980s served to

rejuvenate interest in the traditions of the Garifuna and the popularity of the music swept throughout Central America, so much so that the metropolitan centres are now the engines of growth in recording, promoting and distributing this ‘new’ musical genre.

Punta rock held on to the Garifuna drums and other indigenous percussion instruments, such as different-sized turtle shells, and increased the pace of the punta by adding the electric guitar, acoustic drums and lead and bass guitars. The early songs were in the Garifuna language, celebrating their history and culture – for example, *Uwala Uwala Busiganu* (Don’t be ashamed of your culture) – and Dangriga became the centre of this sound. Today, with its widespread popularity in Central America and among Belizeans and other Central Americans in metropolitan centres, lyrics are also sung in Spanish and English. While punta was the traditional dance music of the Garifuna people, punta rock is more widespread in its appeal, with faster rhythms and more provocative dancing.

Typical punta rock style is evident in the following releases:

- *In Mi Country* – Pen Cayetano;
- *Sopa de Caracol* – Chico Ramos (writer, Belize), performed by Banda Blanca (Honduras);
- *Til da Mawnin!* – Andy Palacio, Stonetree Records.

BOX 7.4

Drumming

While musical instruments vary widely, drums seem to be a main feature in all Caribbean music. This speaks directly to the significance of drumming in African cultures, which was an integral part of worship, celebration and of daily life. Drumming closely mirrors practices in Central and West Africa, such as the competitions between rival drum orchestras, how the drums are held by the knees or beaten while sitting, the varieties of materials used to make drums (hollowed-out tree trunks, with the skin of goats, deer and other animals stretched out on top) and using varying lengths and widths to create different sounds. Koongo terms still in use in

Trinidad are *bula* (to keep rhythm/to hammer) and *ful* (*fula* meaning to beat or hammer).

Europeans did not celebrate the drum as Africans did – they grumbled that the drums were ‘noisy’, but it was more likely that they were distrustful of them – seeing them as the medium for sending messages and as something which seemed to give the enslaved joy and power. Drums were repeatedly outlawed, but that was steadfastly ignored and today drumming in the different genres is a typical characteristic of Caribbean music. The steelpan movement emerged as a new way of drumming which evaded colonial restrictions.

Dance

Caribbean music is often associated with dance, usually a spontaneous response to the music and the setting, though it can also be presented by skilful professionals as a choreographed performance (high culture) performed by national ballet companies such as the Cuban National Ballet or Jamaica's National Dance Theatre Company. Examples are:

- folk dance such as traditional Trinidad limbo dancing, the quadrille, Bermuda's Goombay or Grenada's cakewalk;
- indigenous ceremonial dance such as Guyana's mari mari;
- spiritual dancing, associated with religious practices, such as Kumina;
- popular dance forms such as calypso, soca, ska or punta.

Like music, Caribbean dance also has a history of mixing by crossing dance styles to develop different versions. A number of European court and folkloric dances such as the *quadrille*, *mazurka*, *polka*, *contradanse* and *waltz* were creolised to produce unique forms of Caribbean dance. For example, the quadrille was copied by the enslaved population and then parodied and ridiculed, adding African elements, so that it is now a fully fledged Caribbean folk dance which itself varies widely from Jamaica to Grenada to Martinique. These forms of dance were then hybridised further, as when salsa emerged from *mambo* or when bachata utilised dance moves from both the merengue and the *bolero*. Some, particularly salsa, have become globalised phenomena, via the Caribbean diaspora (§7.4).

7.1.2 Culinary Arts

Culinary arts in the Caribbean show a high degree of creative adaptations of the food traditions of Europe, Africa, India, China and the pre-Columbian peoples. From the time of Contact in the fifteenth century there has been ongoing experimenting across different traditions. Though fusion is at the heart of culinary practices in the Caribbean, making it difficult to pinpoint the particular influence of Spain or Britain, we can still discern colonial influences of the past and some neocolonial trends of today. This is true of many art forms (§8.2.3).

For example, a staple across the Caribbean is saltfish or salted cod. In Jamaica ackee and saltfish is one of the national dishes, as is roast breadfruit and saltfish in St Vincent and duckanoo and saltfish in Antigua. This staple has its origin in the importing of salted and smoked fish from the British colony in Canada to feed the slaves. In addition, animal parts which were not considered fit

for human consumption became typical foods for the enslaved. Today, salted, smoked and pickled meats are highly popular across the Caribbean – smoked herring, pigtail, black pudding, pig foot or chicken foot souse. Not only is the pig foot prized in making souse, but also pigskin and pigface, or sometimes only the snout. In Barbados, pig's ears are an important ingredient in souse. And we also use fish heads, goat belly, oxtail and cow heel – animal parts which are not highly prized, if they are used at all, in western cooking. Once deemed fit only for slave consumption, these foods have undergone centuries of blending with different flavours and spices to produce the favourite foods of Caribbean people in all walks of life. There are similar traditions in the American South, where the influence of slavery is seen in the widespread fondness for chitterlings (the intestines of young pigs, cleaned and boiled, then dipped in batter and fried).

While certain foods are typical across the Caribbean, there are differences from one territory to another based on how the foods are prepared or served, and this may also have colonial origins. Rice and peas (or peas and rice) is a Caribbean staple. However, the red beans and rice of Jamaica is very different from *riz et pois*, the national dish of Haiti, or pigeon peas and rice or black-eyed peas and rice in the southern Caribbean (see Box 7.5 for recipes). Caribbean cooking is famous for its hot and spicy dishes – curries, jerk pork, escovitch fish, chutney, pepperpot – influenced by the Caribs and their use of hot peppers and by the African and Indian cooking traditions. Pepper sauce and a variety of herbs and spices, which not only season meats but vegetables and rice and peas as well, make Caribbean cuisine truly distinctive and a far cry from traditional British cooking. Perhaps the food item most directly linked to the British is the English (or Irish) potato, which was imported during the colonial era and has remained as another staple of the Caribbean diet – but cooked in very different ways, for example, as *alloo choka*.

However, there are certain culinary traditions associated with the British which have been creolised and are now accepted as typical Caribbean ways of life. Note how Caribbean people have taken the British habit of drinking tea and speak of it as drinking anything from coffee and cocoa to hot malt drinks. The idea we have retained about 'tea' being so hegemonic certainly reflects the British preoccupation with it. In traditional British cooking, sauces and gravies are used liberally but they are usually made independently of the main dish and poured on afterwards. Caribbean people have retained the love for gravy but have made it an integral part of the cooking process, soaking and cooking meats

BOX 7.5

Caribbean recipes

Haiti – Riz et pois

For Haitian rice-and-peas, small red kidney beans are used. The beans are first boiled in water and when almost finished they are taken out and sautéed separately in oil and a variety of seasonings such as chives, thyme, cilantro (or coriander) and garlic. The beans and seasonings are then returned to the cooking liquid, to which rice has been added, with some more water, and the two are cooked together.

Southern Caribbean – Black-eyed peas and rice

Fig. 7.3 Black-eyed peas and rice

The black-eyed peas are soaked for an hour and then boiled with salt, black pepper, garlic and a pinch of sugar. When the peas are halfway boiled, rice is then added, along with chive, mint, thyme, onions and pepper. Tomato is the last of the seasonings to be added, just before the rice is finished. Coconut milk, too, is added just before the rice is fully boiled.

Trinidad – Aloo choka

This is a traditional Indian food (*aloo* is a Hindi word meaning potato and *choka* is a general term meaning 'mixed up'). The potatoes are washed, peeled and cut into small pieces. In an iron pot, a clove of garlic and hot pepper are burned in oil. They are removed from the oil and the potato pieces, salt and onion are added and it is covered for a while. When uncovered, pieces of tomato are added and the mixture is stirred constantly as it is fried.

In all the above the emphasis is on timing and seasoning.

in marinades, seasonings, herbs, spices and peppers. The British influence lingers too whenever we have porridge for breakfast, but in the Caribbean oats and wheat have given way to a taste for cornmeal – maize being an indigenous food widely used across the region.

The French influence is still alive in Haiti, Martinique, Guadeloupe and Dominica, especially in their expertise in blending sauces and the use of bouquet garni (herb mixtures) to obtain a perfect balance of flavours. Box 7.6 looks at the specialities of *rouille* and *bouillabaisse*.

Try out one of these French Caribbean recipes and compare it with the style of cuisine you are used to.

The West is also important in Caribbean social and cultural life through the modern labour-saving gadgets, appliances and precooked products of western countries which are influencing Caribbean culinary practices. Caribbean homemakers have relentlessly adapted and changed traditional recipes to fit the limited time at their disposal. No longer is a ham cooked from 'scratch' – that is, put in a pan to boil outside in the yard for hours on end, as was done a generation ago; now they come precooked or with precise instructions for baking. Cakes are no longer beaten by hand; in fact, premixed cake in a box is a common grocery item. Home-baked bread and coconut bake lose out to the store-bought varieties, and many of the traditional dishes are no longer cooked regularly in Caribbean homes but reserved for Sundays and special occasions.

Precooked foods and fast foods supplement the diet of busy Caribbean people who have developed an appreciation for the convenience afforded by the food technologies of the West. The **junk food** phenomenon

Junk food is a pejorative term for fast food, especially foods with little or no nutritional value.

has earned the loyalty not only of young people but of others as well. Fast food chains from the US are well represented in many Caribbean countries. This is not to say that home cooking is dying out; Caribbean people still want their foods cooked in authentic ways, but they have also embraced the convenience foods culture, which means that it is now the norm that two or three meals a week (or more) may be of the fast food variety. While this is a western trend which may impact negatively on the health and well-being of Caribbean people, the tendency of the latter to experiment, blend and creolise may still have a positive influence on American fare.

BOX 7.6**French Caribbean cooking**

The French have a reputation for taking their culinary arts seriously. In mainland France lunchtimes are traditionally long (about two hours), and in the northern part of the country this has nothing to do with the climate but rather with having the time to enjoy and digest a good meal, probably with a glass or two of wine. The pervasiveness of metropolitan culture in the French Caribbean means that this attitude has been taken up by local people, along with a French influence on the recipes themselves. Here are two examples.

Bouillabaisse

Bouillabaisse is fish stew or thick soup using tomatoes, olive oil, garlic, fish and shellfish, chilli, orange, herbs, fennel and saffron. This stew is unique, possibly because of the wondrous flavouring imparted by the combination of saffron, fennel seeds and orange zest. It is traditionally served with rouille.

Rouille

This is a type of mayonnaise with an abundance of chilli pepper and garlic. This mayonnaise is spread on little pieces of toasted French bread, which are



Fig. 7.4 Bouillabaisse with French bread and rouille

dipped in gruyère cheese and then placed in the soup bowls, before the soup is poured over it.

It is debatable whether the British influence is as alive in the cooking traditions of Jamaica, Barbados, Guyana or Trinidad and Tobago.

ACTIVITY 7.1

1. Apart from being convenient, explain why American fast foods are so popular in the Caribbean.
2. In your opinion, to what extent do young people prefer junk foods over indigenous foods?

7.1.3 Festivals**Carnival**

Carnival today is held throughout the Caribbean and in the diaspora in North America, Europe and elsewhere (see §7.4). In some countries it is timed to coincide with 1 August (August Monday), which commemorates Emancipation in the British Caribbean when the newly freed ex-slaves took to the streets in celebration. In other countries where there is a strong Roman Catholic heritage, carnival is normally celebrated on the Monday and Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, which heralds the start of Lent. However, carnival did not originate in the Caribbean, though it has been transformed in the Creole environment into a unique event which has also been taken by migrants to the cities of the diaspora.

The origins of carnival have been much debated (see Box 8.6). The first carnival celebration was a pagan festival in Europe dating from ancient times. It became popular as a Roman Catholic festival in medieval times as '*carne vale*' (farewell to the flesh), signalling the start of fasting for the Lenten season. As a pre-Lenten festival, it may be compared to Mardi Gras, a traditional French festival held on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. This celebration is still held in areas of North America where there is strong French influence, for example New Orleans, and it resembles the Caribbean carnival with parades and exotic costumes. In colonial days it was often associated with folk theatre performances (see below). In the Caribbean the elaborate balls and masquerades of the Europeans, particularly the French, were the first carnivals to occur and these were parodied by the enslaved and enlivened by African and Caribbean cultural expressions. For example, Africans also had masquerade traditions complete with song and dance, particularly the Yoruba, where villagers would wend their way from one village to another wearing masks and costumes bringing messages of healing and celebration.

Across the Caribbean there are variations in when carnival is celebrated, reflecting the different contexts.

For example, in Barbados Crop Over was a celebration dating from the eighteenth century to observe the sugar cane harvest. While it did decline in the early twentieth century because of the dwindling importance of sugar cane, it was revived in the 1970s as a tourism innovation and is celebrated over several weeks culminating on the first days of August every year. In other Caribbean countries carnival has also been deliberately placed to attract tourists as a 'summer festival'. In St Vincent and the Grenadines, carnival is called 'Vincy Mas' and celebrated in late June to early July. Lucian carnival (St Lucia) occurs in late July. Spicemas (Grenada) culminates in the second and third week of August. 'Mas Dominik' (Dominica) and carnival in Trinidad and Tobago, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti and Curaçao are traditionally pre-Lenten festivals. In Guyana carnival is known as Mashramani and was instituted to commemorate the country becoming a republic on 23 February 1970.

All carnival celebrations in the Caribbean are street festivals with mas bands or costumed revellers, with steelbands and brassbands or other percussion instruments providing music, and the songs are primarily calypso, soca or the local variant. The carnival season is marked by a variety of shows and competitions – steelband, calypso, soca, power soca, groovy soca, chutney, chutney soca, extempo, King and Queen of carnival, and others for younger participants. Dimanche Gras is a major competition on the Sunday night before carnival begins, and patrons usually leave there and go directly to J'Ouvert (the early pre-dawn beginning of the festivities characterised by 'dirty mas' – revellers caked in mud, oil and different coloured paints). During the day on Monday and Tuesday the big, medium-sized and small costumed bands (*petty mas*) take to the streets, jumping up to the year's calypsos and soca ditties. By Ash Wednesday the organisers of the festival announce the winners of the Road March (the song played the most as revellers crossed the different judging points along the way), as well as the best bands in the different categories.

Folk theatre

In Europe, passion plays (scenes from the last days of Christ) were performed as well as puppet theatre and Mardi Gras carnival events, which normally preceded the season of Lent. Carnivals took place all over Europe and involved the portrayal of characters in masquerade using masks and costumes, clowns, mimes and parades, as well as the acting out of scenes from local folklore. This tradition of street theatre from Europe merged in the Caribbean with the rituals, music and folklore of the freed Africans to create vibrant celebrations put on in the

streets, back yards, riverbanks, parks or any open space. People told stories, celebrated events and participated in games, routines, dances and various acts. Well-known characters in Caribbean folklore are *moko jumbies*, *Anansi*, *duppies* and *jab jab* (or the devil), who are represented in these stories and enactments.

Festivals give more opportunity for the traditional Caribbean emphasis on word play:

- Carnival in Carriacou (in the Grenadines) includes the 'Shakespeare Mas', which involves verbal clashes between players in an ongoing contest.
- The Midnight Robber is a traditional character in the mas of Trinidad and Tobago. He is feared by children, resplendent in black robes and something resembling a Panama hat. He carries simulated weapons and threatens onlookers with certain death if they do not give up some money. He is serious and menacing. His sentences are long, elaborate and well-rehearsed.

7.1.4 Artisanal Crafts

Artisanal crafts are an important area of popular culture, since such crafts help to form our cultural identity. Crafts made by ordinary people for their own use and the use of their communities have thrived in our region since the times of the first indigenous inhabitants. Today they are also in demand as products for tourists to buy. Recently a non-profit organisation, the Caribbean Artisan Network, has been set up as a regional forum to link artisan craftworkers across the region and offer expertise in many different skills and techniques. Annually they hold a festival called the Caribbean Arts and Crafts Festival. In March 2014 it was held in the British Virgin Islands.

7.2

Human and cultural development via the arts

7.2.1 Contribution to a Sense of Identity and Belongingness

Artists and performers can develop a sense of self-worth in terms of how they see themselves in the world. For example, they can be defined internationally and develop an identity from their achievements and excellence, whether in literature, visual arts, music or dance.

The idea of self-expression is also important in having an experience of 'freedom' – note that the captive and previously colonised people were not really 'free' to express themselves; even their education took the form of

socialisation into the values and culture of the oppressor. The development of an outlook or mental stance which says of a Caribbean person that he or she is equal to anyone and can accomplish anything is therefore not easy to acquire because of our socialisation. The arts can help to redress this.

The success of our writers, creative artists and performance artistes internationally gives Caribbean people a certain pride in their heritage. That kind of feeling helps to resist ethnocentric ideas and cultural imperialism, and contributes to a sense of empowerment, which is the main purpose of human development. This is a process of transcending our socialisation – and it can happen through the arts.

Another way in which the arts influence human development is the way that people can grow intellectually through their dedication to a discipline, be it art, music, dance or literature. Examples might include Bob Marley and his music (§7.3.7) or the steelpan. In this way the arts can become centres of excellence through which Caribbean people can come to understand and find a place in the world.

7.2.2 Contribution to Employment and Livelihood

The arts give rise to new types of employment and livelihood, not only for performers but also for those who run festivals and look after the administration for successful artistes (concert managers, agents and even front-of-house stewards and cleaners). International successes include Nettleford’s dance company, or even popular winners of TV shows, such as Tessanne Chin from Jamaica, who won NBC’s reality TV international

singing contest *The Voice* in 2014, or Anya Ayoun-Chée from Trinidad and Tobago, who won Lifetime TV’s *Project Runway* in 2011 for fashion. These US-based contests are followed by millions around the globe and bring much prestige to the region, and their talents showcase indigenous Caribbean expressions in song and fashion. Similarly, Exodus, as one of our many pansides, tours the world regularly and the players and support staff earn income (foreign exchange, at that) as well as experiencing the wider world and learning from their international exposure. This is true for all Caribbean artistes who become a big enough talent to perform regionally and internationally.

7.2.3 Cultural Development Through the Arts

The arts may be seen as a medium for culture to enter into a conversation with itself and so grow, develop and change. If we define culture as all the practices and beliefs which guide the social living of a group, then clearly the development of the arts would help to give that culture definition. Thus the arts contribute to the development and definition of Caribbean culture, not only to those living within it, and those in the diaspora, but also to people looking at that culture from outside, in the wider world.

7.3 Contributions made by individuals

A number of individuals have made great contributions to Caribbean cultural life, and this should be celebrated by all of us.

ACTIVITY 7.2

1. As you read through these sections, draw up a table to take note of these individual contributions. The table should give the name of the person, his or her date(s), country and the type of culture to which he or she has contributed. In the final column assess the main contribution made by this person. An example is shown below.

2. Add to your table any other persons you know of who have made significant individual contributions to the cultural life of your country or the Caribbean as a whole.

Table to show individual artistic contributions

Name	Date(s)	Country	Type(s) of culture	Main contribution(s)
Rex Nettleford	1933–2010	Jamaica	Dance; scholarship	Presented dance as a culture of resistance or marronage
(add your own list to a table like this)				

7.3.1 Rex Nettleford (1933–2010)



Fig. 7.5 Rex Nettleford

Born in Falmouth, Jamaica, in 1933, Nettleford was educated on the island, including at Cornwall College, and took a degree from the University of the West Indies (UWI). He saw himself as a postcolonial intellectual working to prepare the citizens of the Caribbean to take on the responsibilities of independence. His work ranged widely from writing to lectures to choreography. In 1962, to coincide with independence, he co-founded the National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica to promote Caribbean dance forms. He also directed the UWI's adult education programme and founded the Trade Union Education Institute.

He spoke about his own choreography in 1985 (quoted in Ford-Smith, 2010):

First, [dance] is a skill that depends on the physical and mental capacities of the survivor. One's body belongs only to oneself, despite the laws governing chattel slavery in the English-speaking Caribbean, which until 1834 allowed a person to be the 'property' of another. Second, the language by which the body expresses itself does not have to be anyone else's language, least of all the master's; even when there are borrowings, which are inescapable in a multicultural environment, they can be given shape and form on the borrower's own terms. These strategies are crucial in a situation of pervasive dependency, where all influences are dictated by the overlord. A hold on any activity beyond the control of a cynical power is a valuable weapon of cultural self-defence. The art of dance, comprising the dancer's own body movements informed by his own spiritual and emotional states, is such a weapon.

His name for this shifting and mercurial creative spirit was 'cultural marronage', and this was the conceptual framework for his artistic work. He saw Caribbean culture as a strategy of resistance, comparable to the resistance given to the colonisers by the Maroons, who came down from their mountain hideouts and raided the plantations. In Nettleford's choreography the dancers move diagonally across the stage in alternating waves – entering and exiting, overlapping and becoming visible and then disappearing offstage, actions which are repeated until finally the entire company is present on stage in the finale (Ford-Smith, 2010).

As well as a choreographer, Nettleford was a writer and editor. He edited the first complete anthology of Louise Bennett's work in 1966 with an introduction, and his original work *Mirror, Mirror: Identity, Race and Protest in Jamaica* (1972) became an acclaimed study of its subject.

7.3.2 Louise Bennett (1919–2006)

Another Jamaican, Dr Louise Bennett Coverley, was popularly known as 'Miss Lou'. She was born in Kingston and educated on the island at local schools. She is remembered mainly as a poet who wrote in Jamaican patois rather than Standard English. Using patois she was able to present an authentic Jamaican mindset, with its colourful responses to life.



Fig. 7.6 'Miss Lou' Bennett

Miss Lou's first poem was written at the age of 14. She won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London in the late 1940s, and then worked with various small theatre companies in England before returning to Jamaica to teach drama. She married Eric Winston Coverley in 1954.

Here is an extract from her well-known poem *Noh Lickle Twang*:

*Me glad fe se's you come back bwoy,
But lawd yuh let me dung,
Me shame o' yuh soh till all o'
Me proudness drop a grung.
Yuh mean yuh goh dah 'Merica
An spen six whole mont' deh,
An come back not a piece betta
Dan how yuh did goh wey?*

As well as working as a poet and drama teacher, Louise Bennett gained a reputation for comedy, and her readings of her own poems, some of them live recordings, are readily available on the Internet.

She won a number of awards for her work, including the Norman Manley Award for Excellence in the field of the arts, the Order of Jamaica and silver and gold Musgrave medals from the Institute of Jamaica. In 1983 she was awarded an honorary doctorate of letters by the UWI. She was also honoured by universities abroad, including an honorary doctorate from York University, Toronto (1998), and was awarded the MBE in 1960.

7.3.3 Beryl McBurnie (1914–2000)

Beryl McBurnie was born in Port of Spain, Trinidad, in 1914 and, like Louise Bennett and Rex Nettleford, was educated locally. She trained as a teacher and developed an interest in drama, but her father wanted her to become a doctor, so in 1938 she went to New York to train for a career in medicine. This did not interest her, however, and she became involved in the dance scene in New York and worked with the legendary American dance exponent Martha Graham. She then had a short but successful career as a dancer, under the stage name of La Belle Rosette, in the United States. In 1942 she returned to Trinidad to work with her own dance troupe, though she travelled widely in search of inspiration and took the troupe on tour on several occasions. In 1948 she converted part of her parents' property to a theatre, called the Little Carib, where she put on many dance performances with her troupe. She also invited other artists to perform, including the Invaders Steelband (Emrit, n.d.)

In addition to the dance troupe, McBurnie worked as a dance instructor for the Department of Education in



Fig. 7.7 Beryl McBurnie

Trinidad and Tobago, introducing her students to folk dance of all kinds. In 1957 she also began teaching dance at UWI, Mona Campus, and later gave many lectures internationally, especially in the US. She was awarded the OBE in 1958, as well as several awards in Trinidad, for her contribution to dance. She died in Port of Spain in March 2000.

7.3.4 Paule Marshall (1929–)

The novelist Paule Marshall was born Valenzia Pauline Burke in Brooklyn, New York. Her parents were recent immigrants from Barbados, and she first visited the island when she was nine years old.

Although she is classed as an American author rather than a Caribbean one, Marshall's novels all concern Caribbean themes, and many are about returning migrants and their experiences in Barbados or other Caribbean locations (*The Chosen Place, the Timeless People*, for instance, is set on a fictional Caribbean island). Here is an extract from *The Poets in the Kitchen*, about her experience of home life and its inherent intellectual richness.

In her *New York Times* essay “The Poets in the Kitchen” (1983), she described her experience of home life and the group of women who gathered in the basement kitchen of their house in Barbados. While Paule Marshall and her sister did their homework in the corner, these women drank tea or coffee and engaged in passionate conversation about a wide range of subjects. These overheard conversations inspired Marshall, she explained, more than the more famous literary figures whose works she read later.

In 1950, while still studying, Paule married Kenneth Marshall, a psychologist, and although they divorced in 1963 and she later remarried, she is usually known by her first married name. She wrote a number of novels, including *Brown Girl, Brownstones* (1959), *Soul Clap Hands and Sing* (1961) and *Praisesong for the Widow* (1983), which was dedicated to her grandmother and finally established her as a major writer. She also lectured at Yale University, among other prestigious institutions, and was awarded a number of prizes for her work.

◆ **Try to read some of Paule Marshall’s novels. To what extent do you think her origins in the diaspora influenced her work?**



Fig. 7.8 Paule Marshall

7.3.5 Aubrey Cummings (1947–2010)

Aubrey Cummings grew up in Georgetown, Guyana. Although in his elementary school he was noticed for his artistic talent, he himself preferred music. He taught himself to play the guitar and joined a string band, Bumble and the Saints, in 1965. He toured Barbados with the group, but then



Fig. 7.9 Aubrey Cummings

left it, and worked with several other musicians, including Music Machine, which revived the Big Band Sound of an earlier era. He settled in Barbados and established a career there as guitarist and singer, performing regularly at the Round House in Bathsheba. He won awards in 1984 and 1985 as Best Male Vocalist and prizes at the Caribbean Song Festivals organised by the Caribbean Broadcasting Union. He also took part in acoustic guitar festivals organised by Barbados’ National Cultural Foundation.

He is particularly remembered for his smooth renditions of songs such as *A flower name June* and *Annalee*. The lyrics of his love songs revealed a humanity which transcended the banalities of what was fashionable in such songs. The words indeed could stand as poems in their own right, as you can see from these lyrics from the song *It’s Real, It’s Life*:

*It’s real, it’s life!
With all its twists and turns
It’s real, it’s life!
And the lessons that we learn
There are many roads to take
We can choose to bend or break
Or we can be strong and weather
The pain and strife
It’s real, it’s life!*

Source: http://www.ecaroh.com/easy_listening/aubreycummings_moonoverme.htm

As well as being a musician he is well known for his paintings, particularly for portraits of Barbadian musicians who have died – a collection which is a veritable portrait gallery. Many of his paintings have been displayed in art galleries in Barbados.

- ◆ Listen to some of Aubrey Cummings' music and view some of his paintings. Why do you think he is honoured as an important contributor to Caribbean popular culture?

7.3.6 Martin Carter (1927–)

Martin Carter was born to middle-class parents in Georgetown in 1927 and has lived all his life in Guyana. He classes himself as mixed race: 'We are all mixed up with everything else, every possible thing. You have in the same family a brother as white as white can be, and the other brother comparatively brown. And we had more than one example in Guyana of this type of thing' (quoted in Paddington, 1995). He studied at Queen's College, one of Guyana's leading schools, where most of the teachers were British, and his writing was first published in the school magazine, but he went on to work in the Guyana civil service, which he found boring in the extreme. In 1951 he published his first collection of poems, called *The Hill of Fire Glows Red*. Here is part of one of the poems it contained:

*And so
if you see me
looking at your hands
listening when you speak
marching in your ranks
you must know
I do not sleep to dream,
but dream to change the world.*

(quoted in Paddington, 1995)

However, as well as writing poetry, Carter also became a political activist in post-war British Guiana and joined the People's Progressive Party, led by Cheddi Jagan. The party won elections in 1953 but the British saw it as a communist organisation and removed it from power within weeks. Carter himself was arrested and imprisoned at Atkinson Field detention camp in New Amsterdam. His detention only inspired him further with belief in freedom:

*If I do not live to see that day
My son will see it.
If he does not see that day
His son will see it.
And it will come circling the world like fire
It will come to this land and every land
And when it comes I'll come alive again
and laugh again and walk out of this prison.*

(quoted in Paddington, 1995)

Carter later left the party and worked as an information officer with a multinational company, but in 1964 he became Minister of Information in a coalition government dominated by the People's National Congress (PNC) under Forbes Burnham, although he never joined the PNC formally. In 1989 he was awarded the Guyana Prize for Literature. Scholars rate him as one of the best Caribbean poets of the twentieth century, but his work is little known outside Guyana.

7.3.7 Bob Marley (1945–1981)

Robert Nesta Marley was born into humble circumstances at Nine Miles, St. Ann, in rural Jamaica in 1945. His father was white and his mother a black Jamaican. In the 1950s his mother moved the family to Trench Town, an inner city ghetto in Kingston. He was always interested in music and had learned to play the guitar at a young age. The Trench Town scene was vibrant with many local musicians and singers, and he sought to learn as much as he could. In 1963, together with Bunny Livingston and Peter Tosh he formed the *Wailing Wailers* and while the band was popular for a while, they did not make a significant breakthrough until Island Records signed them in 1972. They produced

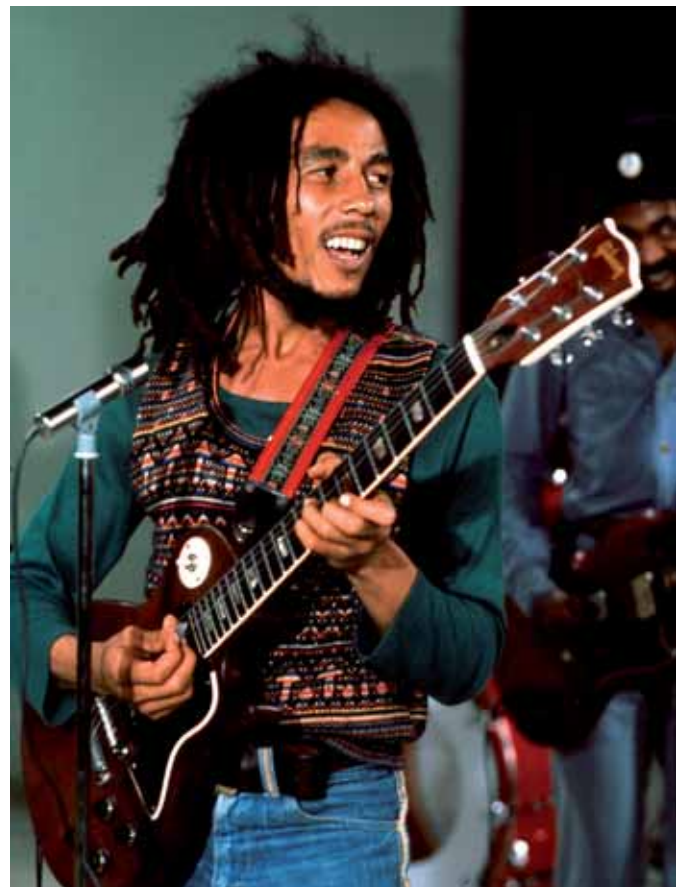


Fig. 7.10 Bob Marley

albums, including hits such as ‘I shot the sheriff’, and toured the international circuit.

Re-named *Bob Marley and the Wailers* when the rest of the original Wailers left, and including the *I-Threes* (Rita Marley, Marcia Griffiths and Judy Mowatt), the band went on to increasing success, with hits such as ‘No woman no cry’, ‘War’, ‘Is this Love’ and many others. In the 1970s and 1980s Bob Marley grew into an iconic reggae superstar known the world over and, established his own record label Tuff Gong (his childhood nickname).

His adoption of the Rastafari faith was largely influenced by the poverty he experienced in the ghetto and being drawn to the spiritual and at the same time political themes in their music. In the tenement yards of Kingston, reggae emerged from the fusion of ska, rocksteady and the influences of nyabingi drumming. Marley increasingly began to sing about the highly charged politics of his country and the promise of a better life through allegiance to Jah or the Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia. He distanced himself from ‘Babylon’ and sang about freedom from oppression and Marcus Mosiah Garvey’s call for a return to Africa. Biblical themes are ever present in his lyrics as in ‘Exodus’ and ‘Redemption Song’. In short, reggae music was protest music and Bob Marley was its greatest exponent.

Marley died from cancer in 1981, at the height of his career. For many, Jamaica today is synonymous with Marley and the Rastafari, twin images exploited by the tourism sector to enhance the attractions of Jamaica as a tourist destination. At Nine Miles, his birthplace, where he is buried, the Marley Museum is visited by thousands annually. His marble mausoleum was built to resemble an Ethiopian Orthodox Church and there is a place to pray. This reflects an aspect of Bob Marley’s legacy that differentiates him from other famous singers – there is a sense that Marley was a revolutionary, highly spiritual and inspiring in others a sense of solace and overcoming. It is not uncommon at the museum to see persons from as far away as Japan and New Zealand who have journeyed to this place as if on pilgrimage. His country conferred on him the Order of Merit of Jamaica for he is undoubtedly their greatest son.

7.3.8 Peter Minshall

Minshall was born in 1941 to an English father and Guyanese mother and spent his early years in Guyana with his grandmother. He then joined his family in Trinidad. In his youth he was sceptical about mas, but after studying in England he came to see it as an art form in its own right. Between 1976 and 2006 he brought out bands which astounded the public with their spectacular effects and dramatic presentation. Some

had profound themes such as the human condition, the state of the world, the eternal tension between good and bad, the environment, and hope for the future. Others were light-hearted or abstract in nature. The costumes he designed sported unique features, such as the huge wings when he played *Papillon* in 1982. He used gigantic puppets in the form of *Saga Boy* and *TanTan* which were in great demand at carnivals all over the world. He also used choreography and street theatre as the band passed across the various stages at different judging points in Port of Spain during Carnival.

Compared to Minshall, other band leaders created their mas along more conventional themes and while they did also produce spectacular Kings and Queens of the Band, displaying the costume and having a good time were the main objectives. But Minshall wanted mas to be meaningful, artistic and spiritual as well as fun. In 1983 he brought out *The River* which became a trilogy, incorporating *Callaloo* in 1984, and *The Golden Calabash: Princes of Darkness and Lords of Light* in 1985. *The River* portrayed the Washerwoman in white, signifying her purity, openness and positive potential. *Mancrab* on the other hand represented the polluting factor with his greed, selfishness and rampant technology. Quite apart from the costumes he produced, his understanding of the mas was that it created vehicles (the mas-costumes) for the transmission of human energy. The masquerader is inspired by the costume to dance it, play it, perform it, thus expressing and amplifying human energy. This energy was felt by both masquerader and spectator, an immediate and present moment, leaving both experiencing a kind of power and liberation.

Always a controversial figure, Peter Minshall is considered to be the most innovative band leader in the



Fig. 7.11 *The Spirit of Light*, from HALLELUJAH by Peter Minshall (1995)

history of Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago. His work has provoked criticism as well as praise, though in the later part of his career he became established and accepted as a designer of great talent. For his creations he won the Band of the Year title on many occasions. His fame spread and he was asked to be artistic director and designer for the opening ceremony of the Summer Olympics in 1992 and 1996 and the 2002 Winter Olympics, among other international events. In 1991 the University of the West Indies conferred on him an honorary doctorate.

7.4

Art forms in the diaspora

7.4.1 Music

Whether it is reggae, soca, son, punta or zouk, Caribbean music affirms Caribbean people's sense of identity with their homelands. In a way it makes them feel more comfortable living in the diaspora. Caribbean migrants have tended to settle in the big cities of the developed world, cities which are more likely to reflect a cosmopolitan outlook quite different from culture in the rural areas. Thus, the impact of Caribbean music has been largely in urban areas where there is a sizeable Caribbean diaspora, and it can be argued that music has contributed hugely to a phenomenon known as **transnationalism**.

Transnationalism occurs when members of a diaspora develop a sense of community across geographical or political frontiers, linked by culture.

ACTIVITY 7.3

1. Read the case study in Box 7.7 on the dance/music form salsa and answer the questions.
 - a. Explain how salsa has become (i) transnational; and (ii) globalised.
 - b. How has salsa 'become a force for acculturation'?
 - c. Using the Internet (<http://salsacircuit.com/category/events>), find out some of the venues where salsa congresses are happening this month.
2. Listen to some salsa music and describe the type of rhythms. If you understand Spanish, write down some of the ideas found in the lyrics of salsa songs.

BOX 7.7

Salsa around the world



When it first emerged, salsa was not seen as a rhythm or style of music in its own right, but simply a way of playing the Cuban son and mamba music. Today, however, salsa has become a transnational phenomenon. It has also become globalised. Elements of different dance types, such as dancehall, zouk, merengue, bachata and samba, have become attached to it or are danced to its rhythms. Some artists have included Indian motifs or electronic instrumentation in their sound palette (Kabir, 2013). In a sense, salsa has become a force for acculturation. Those who dance it professionally are not always Spanish-speaking or of Cuban origin. Recording artists who sing the songs which accompany salsa may be based in New York or London or even Tokyo. In March 2014 alone, international salsa congresses were held in venues as diverse as Berlin (Germany), Chicago (US), Istanbul (Turkey), London (UK) and Nelson (New Zealand).

Research mini-project

With some friends, find out how to dance salsa and practise so that you can demonstrate to other students in your class or to the whole school. If you have talented musicians in your school, ask them to play for you. Experiment to find out what other types of dance you could dance to salsa rhythms.

7.4.2 Festivals

Another important art form which has developed in the diaspora is the transnational version of carnival, of which the Notting Hill Carnival held in London (Box 7.8), Canada's Caribana (Box 7.9) and Brooklyn's Labour Day Parade (Box 7.10) are particularly good examples.

Read Boxes 7.8, 7.9 and 7.10 and identify the common elements seen in diasporic carnivals.

7.4.3 Literature, Theatre and Music

Caribbean creative artists, writers and performers in the diaspora have had an enormous influence worldwide.

A good example is V.S. (Vidia) Naipaul (Box 7.11). An important group, known as the Caribbean Artists Movement, was formed in the 1960s in the UK as a cultural initiative to link Caribbean writers and artists and encourage their work (Box 7.12).

BOX 7.8

The Notting Hill Carnival, London



Fig. 7.12 The Notting Hill Carnival, London, 2013

Notting Hill is a district in West London, home to a large Caribbean diaspora. On the last Sunday and Monday in August every year (the Monday is a summer public holiday in the United Kingdom) a major Caribbean-style carnival is held. Street food, dancing, musical performances of all kinds, parading steelbands (and a steelpan competition), wonderful costumes and a multifarious procession of floats show the people of London how its Caribbean diaspora can celebrate their culture and roots. The Sunday is usually devoted to the children's competitions and procession, the Monday to those of the adults. A variety of after-parade parties are also linked to the event.

The carnival was first held in 1964 as a way to cement links between local Afro-Caribbean

immigrants in London and to help them retain and celebrate their cultural traditions. Steelbands paraded through the streets and local people came out of their homes to watch. At first the authorities feared that it would be a focus for racial conflict, especially when racial tensions were high, as happened from time to time in some areas of London. But the reverse turned out to be true. Londoners and other British residents have come to value the event for its colourful, joyous celebrations, and the Notting Hill Carnival eventually became a way for Caribbean immigrants and native Londoners to celebrate together.

Source: www.thenottinghillcarnival.com, accessed 3 April 2014

BOX 7.9**Caribana**

First staged in 1967, Caribana is now an annual festival held in Toronto over a long weekend around the end of July. Hotel packages can be booked including accommodation and tickets to various events. Every year the city plays host to over a million visitors and it is the largest cultural festival in North America. Competitions include Pan Alive, the Junior Carnival Parade and the King and Queen competition, and the main event is the parade on the Sunday, the final day of the festival, in which there are around 10 000 masked and costumed participants. As with the Notting Hill Carnival, there are plenty of parties associated with the event, drawing in a diverse group of people, not only from the Caribbean diaspora in Canada, but also from tourists from all over North America.

BOX 7.10**West Indian Day Parade, New York City**

For nearly half a century New York City has celebrated Caribbean culture at a five-day carnival held every August/September in Brooklyn, a district of New York which, like Notting Hill in London, is home to a large Caribbean community. The carnival has its own organisation, WIADCA (West Indian American Day Carnival Association). The carnival incorporates a major world music festival (the 'Caribbean Woodstock'), the Panorama steelband competition, Dimanche Gras and a junior costume parade. It culminates in the main parade down Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn on Labour Day Monday, an American public holiday, with floats and costumes similar to those seen at carnival celebrations in Notting Hill, Toronto Caribana and other smaller carnivals all over the world.

BOX 7.11**V.S. Naipaul (1932–)**

Naipaul was born in Trinidad in 1932 as the grandson of an indentured labourer, but has been domiciled in the UK for many years and now holds British citizenship. He left Trinidad for the UK in 1950 to study at Oxford University on a government scholarship and ended up making his life abroad. He used his experiences as a young migrant in Oxford, and subsequently in London, as background for many of his most important novels, including *Miguel Street*, and built the famous *A House for Mr Biswas* around the experiences of his father as an Indian second-generation migrant in Trinidad.

As well as writing novels, he is also a travel writer, including *The Middle Passage*, based on travels around the Caribbean in 1960–1961 at the invitation of Eric Williams, prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago. He also visited India in 1962, where he wrote *An Area of Darkness*, and spent time in Uganda as writer-in-residence at Makerere University in the capital, Kampala, where he completed *The Mimic Men*.

Over a career spanning more than 50 years, Naipaul has published over 30 books. He won a Nobel Prize for literature in 2001. The Nobel committee praised his work 'for having united perceptive narrative and incorruptible scrutiny in works that compel us to see the presence of suppressed histories'. He was knighted in 1986.

Some writers have criticised Naipaul for coming too close to the colonial world view, but there is no doubting either the quality of his writing or the prestige in which he is held worldwide as someone of Caribbean heritage.



Fig. 7.13 V.S. Naipaul

BOX 7.12

Caribbean Artists Movement (CAM)

The Caribbean Artists Movement was formed in London in 1966 to provide a link between the many artists and writers from the Anglophone Caribbean who were working in England at that time. The movement's three founders – Edward Kamau Brathwaite (Barbados), Andrew Salkey (Jamaica) and John La Rose (Trinidad) – were concerned that Caribbean artists were being marginalised by mainstream British society. They needed a forum to discuss matters of interest and provide encouragement for each other. Although CAM was seen as a movement for social change in the Caribbean, it was not a political activist movement like Black Power. Discussion rather than direct action was its means of influence.

The first, private, meeting was held in December 1966 at the home of Brathwaite and his wife Doris. As well as Salkey and La Rose, it was also attended by Louis Jones, Orlando Patterson, Evan Jones and

Anthony Haynes. Here it was proposed that a more formal discussion be held at Patterson's house in January 1967, and Aubrey Williams was invited to join. At this second meeting the name Caribbean Artists Movement was proposed by Nerys Patterson, and the movement was formally launched in March 1967 at the West Indian Students' Centre with a symposium on 'New Directions in West Indian Writing'.

CAM quickly developed into something much larger and more important than its founders had envisaged, with members in the diaspora of Africa, North America and other parts of the Commonwealth as well as Europe. Three annual conferences were held between 1967 and 1969, two at the University of Kent, the third jointly with the West Indian Students Union at the West Indian Students Centre. CAM's heyday was between 1967 and 1972, but its influence continued to be felt in the diaspora for many years afterwards.



Wrap Up

Definitions of culture abound, and are both contested and complex. But the contribution of the Caribbean to world culture, especially popular culture, has been enormous. This is partly because of the many influences on the development of Caribbean culture, from Africa, Europe and Asia among other regions, arising from the varied origins of our people. It is also because of the size and importance of the Caribbean diaspora in other continents, particularly North America or Europe, where Caribbean culture has entered the mainstream.

Research TOPICS

Focusing on your own country or territory, or a Caribbean country with which you are familiar, carry out in-depth research on one or more art forms which are particularly associated with it. Some examples you might choose are:

- high culture such as ballet, western art, literature, drama or classical music;
- popular dance or song;
- indigenous or creole art forms such as steelpan;
- patois or creole poetry;
- street theatre or mas.

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Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Define the terms 'high culture' and 'popular culture'. (2 marks)
(b) Explain with examples how these terms can be applied to (i) dance and (ii) musical theatre. (4 marks)
- 2 (a) (i) Where did carnival originate? (1 mark)
(ii) What did it celebrate? (1 mark)
(b) Describe TWO important carnivals held outside the Caribbean region. (4 marks)
- 3 (a) Identify TWO dishes typical of Caribbean cuisine. (2 marks)
(b) For ONE of these, describe the type of main ingredient used. (2 marks)
(c) State the non-regional influences behind this dish. (2 marks)
- 4 (a) Identify TWO Caribbean dishes which have synthesised European and Asian elements. (2 marks)
(b) State TWO ways in which slavery has influenced culinary practices in the Caribbean. (4 marks)
- 5 (a) State THREE types of dance which have contributed to modern salsa rhythms. (3 marks)
(b) Explain why salsa has become so popular globally. (3 marks)
- 6 (a) From which Caribbean country did Rex Nettleford and Louise Bennett come? (1 mark)
(b) Identify the art form(s) to which EACH made an important contribution. (2 marks)
(c) Explain why Louise Bennett chose to use patois instead of Standard English for her work. (3 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Assess the contribution to Caribbean culture made by TWO different musicians from TWO countries.
- 2 Explain how human development in the Caribbean is fostered through the arts.
- 3 Describe the events which make up 'carnival' in the diaspora. How do they differ from home-grown Caribbean carnivals?
- 4 Write a short biography of ONE writer with global influence who was born in the Caribbean.

Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 To what extent can we include popular cultural expressions such as cuisine and festivals under the umbrella of 'the Caribbean arts'?
- 2 'Art forms at home and in the diaspora are just two sides of the same coin.' Discuss this statement with reference to ONE art form.
- 3 Analyse, with examples, the elements of postcolonialism which can be detected in diasporic art forms.

8

Caribbean–Global Interactions



Jamaica national soccer team, National Stadium, October 2013

Since the arrival of Columbus the Caribbean region has been involved in interactions with Europe and later on with the US and Canada – referred to collectively as ‘the West’ or ‘metropolitan’ countries. This interaction was an early form of globalisation, which knitted the economy, culture and society of the Caribbean and Western Europe into a close relationship. However, it was also a relationship between dominant metropolitan and peripheral Caribbean countries. In recent years the emphasis has begun to be reversed, so that Caribbean influences on extra-regional countries, particularly in the diaspora in Europe and North America, have begun to be much more important, especially in the realm of culture, as we saw in Chapter 7. In this chapter we will explore the nature of these influences together with those of western societies on the Caribbean within a context of the imperialism and colonialism of the past, and the neocolonial and postcolonial relationships of today.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. explain how imperial and colonial policies influenced Caribbean society and culture;
2. describe neocolonial and postcolonial aspects of Caribbean society and culture;
3. assess how the identity of Caribbean people has been influenced by colonialism;
4. discuss the influence of the consumption patterns, creative expression, politics, sport and tourism of extra-regional countries on the Caribbean;
5. analyse the impact of the Caribbean on extra-regional societies using examples drawn from politics, economics, creative expression, religion and the culinary arts.

8.1

Caribbean influences on extra-regional countries

Even though European colonial powers, and more recently the United States, have enjoyed hegemony over Caribbean countries in past centuries, as we shall see later in this chapter, there is still scope for Caribbean society and culture to make an impact on extra-regional countries.

8.1.1 The Caribbean Diaspora in the United States and the United Kingdom

The Caribbean diaspora, comprising people who live and work outside the region, whether temporarily or permanently, is very large indeed, increasing year by year because of outmigration from Caribbean territories which cannot supply their people's desire for economic prosperity and living space – and sometimes for political stability or connection with metropolitan culture.

Political influences

Caribbean immigrants in Europe and North America are not yet sufficiently organised, in general, to be a force which directly impacts upon metropolitan politics. One exception is the Cuban population of South Florida, USA. Many Cubans have migrated illegally to Florida, often in small boats, since they are not permitted to travel outside their own country by the Cuban authorities, but they have in general been allowed to stay because of their probable fate if they are **repatriated**. Within this

Repatriation refers to the return (generally involuntary) of migrants to their home country.

Cuban community there is an anti-communist group dedicated to overthrowing the Castro regime. They have formed powerful associations, one of which is the Cuban American Foundation, which relentlessly lobbies US politicians and policymakers to maintain a hardline attitude to Cuba and to continue to enforce the trade embargo. One reason for their success is that the US Government is also bent on removing the communist presence from its doorstep.

Since 1972 people from another Caribbean country, Haiti, have also been finding their way to the United States, by both official and unofficial channels – some, like their Cuban counterparts, taking the risky voyage by small boat across the Caribbean Sea. This is still continuing today, with periodic headlines in the US press detailing the capsizing or sinking of small vessels that have come to grief on the journey. In the wake of the Haiti earthquake of 2010, many Haitians displaced by the disaster also made this journey. These 'boat people' are also proving important migrants in terms of their influence on US policy thinking.

Find out how the Haitian 'boat people' and the Haitian lobby in the US are influencing politics in that country.

There are people of Caribbean origin who have attained high office in the various arms of the US Government and judiciary and who are able to work 'from the inside' in influencing local policy. Many hold dual citizenship so they are both Americans and Caribbean citizens. It is interesting to note that a large number of Caribbean migrants are not averse to returning home, before or

after retirement, and maintain close ties with their home territories. To this end they are very interested in efforts by Caribbean governments to recognise their diasporic communities, especially in the issue that comes up periodically – allowing Caribbean citizens abroad to vote in national elections. It is not unlikely, therefore, that these individuals with loyalties to both the US and the Caribbean are able to influence policy in ways favourable to our region whenever they can.

Since the legislative, judicial and executive arms are separated in the American system of government (see Box 8.1), policy can be influenced by a host of lobbyists promoting different issues and cases. In addition, the Pentagon (in charge of the armed forces), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Treasury and the Department of Defense are all influenced by their own special interests and the lobbies that promote those

interests. This openness in the US political system suggests that issues pertaining to the Caribbean may well find a sympathetic hearing through one of many policymaking routes.

Each US state enjoys a great deal of autonomy in its relations with the federal government in Washington, and states try to protect their rights as much as possible. Thus, a state such as Florida, while not responsible for US foreign policy, can influence major issues to do with the Caribbean because of the high volume of trade it transacts with the Caribbean, and because so many Caribbean people live in Florida and are able to form pressure groups that get the attention of some office in the state policy apparatus. The top 30 US cities ranked by numbers of Caribbean settlers in their populations are all in Florida, and the vast majority of the top 100 are also resident in that state. In the highest ranked, Westchester, more than

BOX 8.1

The separation of powers in the US political system

Before the United States fought for and won its independence from Britain, it had established a constitution for its new country. The American constitution was therefore written to address the problems that the American revolutionaries perceived in the *Westminster system* of government, especially as it was used in the autocratic hands of the British King George III and his advisers (you will learn more about this system later in the chapter). They decided that the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary should all be clearly separated. These 'checks and balances', as they were called, were designed to make sure that no one element of government could dominate the rest.

- The president is elected for a four-year term, and is only permitted two terms in office (a total of eight years). He (or she – but so far they have always been male) is elected in separate elections from the representatives and senators. It is not unusual for the president to come from a different political party from the majority in either the Senate or the House of Representatives, especially after mid-term Congressional elections when the president or his party may be less popular than they were at the time of his election.
- The president, with advisers from the executive, is responsible for the day-to-day running of the country and for formulating policies that the legislature (the Senate and the House of

Representatives, together known as Congress) then discuss and either support or veto.

- The highest ranks of the judiciary, in the form of the Supreme Court, can pass judgement on laws passed by the legislature to make sure that they conform with the principles of the constitution.

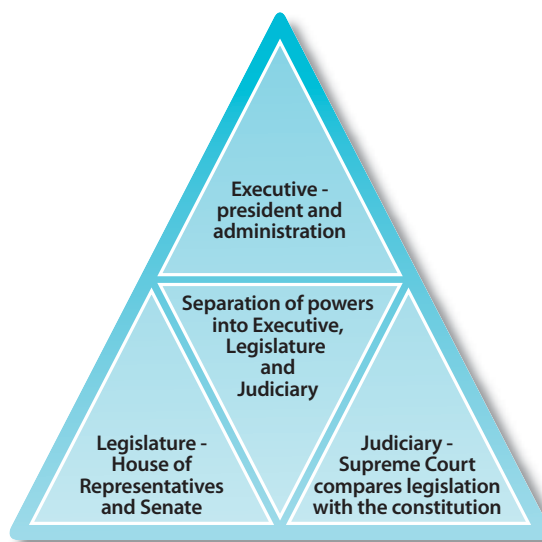


Fig. 8.1 The separation of powers in the US system

half the population originally came from the Caribbean (<http://www.city-data.com/top2/h132.html>).

◆ **Compare and contrast the US system of checks and balances with the system of government in your own or another Caribbean country. How does the constitution of your chosen country ensure that one element of government does not acquire too much power? Are these checks adequate, in your opinion? If not, how would you amend the constitution to improve the situation?**

Immigration policies

Caribbean migrants in the metropolitan cities of the United States, Canada and Europe take a close interest in the much-publicised debates there that focus on immigration policy. Citizens of the host country tend to be hostile to immigrants because they feel that they will accept lower wages and keep the price of labour down. In addition, there are usually racial and ethnic tensions between immigrants and members of the host nation. US, Canadian and British governments are strongly attuned to how their citizens feel about migrants, especially in times of economic downturn, and there continues to be a powerful domestic lobby to drastically restrict immigration, at the same time that a growing number of organisations are committed to defending migrants' rights. Politically, then, immigration and the laws governing migrants' status are highly charged issues.

Periodically these extra-regional countries engage in exercises to round up illegal aliens (or visitors who have overstayed their welcome), as well as non-citizen criminals who have completed their prison sentences, and send them back to their countries of origin. This policy of **deporting** immigrants back to the Caribbean

Deportation is a forcible and direct form of repatriation, where the deportee is actually escorted to the aircraft. Deportation generally implies that the person concerned has done something illegal or is personally unwelcome in the deporting country.

with little warning has been sharply criticised by Caribbean governments, forcing the US in particular to recognise the sensitivity of the issue and to pledge cooperation with Caribbean security officials.

Increasingly, the US is finding that cooperation with Caribbean governments is a better policy to adopt than taking an arrogant stance, especially when both are trying to address some common problems.

Research mini-project

Carry out independent research and write a report on immigration law as it stands at present in either the United States or the United Kingdom or both. Use the following questions to help you.

- 1 *What obstacles are there to citizens of your country migrating to the US or UK? Have these grown or decreased over the past ten years?*
- 2 *What criteria do immigrants have to meet (a) to get a work permit for temporary residence; (b) to settle permanently and/or take out citizenship in either of these countries?*
- 3 *Are there any further obstacles to immigration?*

8.1.2 Trade

Because most Caribbean countries do not have sufficient arable land to feed their populations, much of our food comes from abroad, and the United States is the largest supplier of food products into the region. There is also a very large demand for consumer products from the US. In 2012, for example, consumer goods worth US\$874.3m were exported to the region, a 6 per cent increase on the previous year (CBATO, 2013).

The state of Florida does most of its trade with the Caribbean and this supports tens of thousands of jobs. In this trade the US enjoys a healthy surplus, to the tune of several billion dollars. Thus, any threats to the economic stability of the Caribbean are of concern to the US.

In recent years the threat of terrorism has opened US eyes to the vulnerability of the Caribbean, where terrorists may be able to establish bases and destabilise the region. So in addition to homeland security (vigilance about its own borders), the US is also concerned about its lucrative market in the Caribbean and its supply of strategic raw materials. For example, Trinidad and Tobago is a major producer of methanol and ammonium sulphate and provides 40 per cent of US imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG). The petrochemical industrial complexes producing these strategic materials, however, have minimal security measures in place, making them vulnerable to disruption (Bryan and Flynn, 2002).

Its vulnerability, small size and few resources, attributes which made the US in the past either ignore the Caribbean or feel they could invade it with impunity, are today major issues forcing a change of attitude. There is a growing understanding now that the security of

BOX 8.2

Shiprider Agreement

The full name of this agreement between the United States and the countries of the Caribbean is Agreement Concerning Co-operation in Suppressing Illicit Maritime Drug Trafficking. From this you can work out that the agreement, was drawn up specifically to help US coastguards to work with Caribbean countries against drug trafficking across the region. This is a **bilateral agreement** signed between individual Caribbean

A **bilateral agreement** is one with two signatories only, as opposed to a **multilateral agreement**, which has several signatories.

countries and the US over a number of years; for example, Barbados signed up to the agreement in 1996, and Jamaica in 2004. We could therefore think of the Shiprider Agreement in the plural. The agreement allows US coastguard and navy personnel to board and/or detain ships they have good reason to believe may be carrying drug shipments or carrying out other criminal activities. Under some versions of this agreement, a country allows US personnel to ride on local coastguard ships as well as accepting the presence of US ships in their territorial waters, hence the name Shiprider.

the Caribbean directly impacts upon the security of the US. However, this does not necessarily mean that the Caribbean can oppose the US freely, as we have seen with the Shiprider Agreement (Box 8.2). This is because of the possible backlash, such as withdrawal of aid or closing off of markets. Caribbean governments have to tread carefully in their dealing with the regional giant.

8.1.3 Cultural Influences

Festivals

Trinidad-style carnivals and reggae and dancehall festivals are becoming an integral part of the culture and society of extra-regional countries, as we saw in Chapter 7. London's Notting Hill Carnival is the biggest open-air festival in Europe with more than two million visitors spending around £30 million (Box 7.8), while Caribana in Canada (Box 7.9) and the West Indian (Labour Day) Parade in New York (Box 7.10), are major open-air festivals in North America. About one million attend

Caribana celebrations and two million gather annually for Labour Day in Brooklyn. Patrons spend millions of dollars, constituting an important source of income for these metropolitan centres. In addition, carnivals in Miami, Washington and Atlanta are growing. Even the small Caribbean community in Australia now organises a 'Sydney Bacchanal', which most likely will grow as the others have grown, largely because these extra-regional societies do not already have the equivalent of a street festival combining music, dancing, theatre and creative costuming. Caribbean migrants are driving the development of carnivals wherever they settle, not only enhancing the cultural diversity of these cities but contributing to their economic life as well.

Caribbean music

Although carnival is a popular festival worldwide, it is still seen as specifically Caribbean. Of all the cultural riches of the Caribbean and its diaspora, only reggae, steelpan and the culture of the Rastafari have made a real breakthrough into the mainstream culture of the US, Canada and Europe, though as we saw in the previous chapter dance forms such as salsa have popularised their associated music across the globe.

Why does Caribbean music not have a greater impact?

Today, music is a 'commodity' and the very success of reggae in western countries is impacting on its transformations in many ways, not the least of which is that its production, promotion and dissemination are being handled largely by capitalist interests in the western world. Yet Caribbean recording stars, record producers and promoters and cultural organisations recognise that they have not been able to penetrate the huge markets of extra-regional countries effectively. The markets for Caribbean music remain strongly tied to the people of the Caribbean diaspora, although there is steelpan, for example, on the curriculum of music schools in western countries and many of these countries have school steelbands, especially those with a large Caribbean diaspora. The North American and European markets will continue to be major markets for Caribbean artistes but only a tiny percentage of that market is being tapped at the moment. Those involved in music should now brainstorm ways of bringing Caribbean music to a wider audience in western countries.

One way is through securing a larger share of the radio listenership. How to get non-Caribbean people to tune into and become appreciative of Caribbean music? The obvious answer lies in promotions of different kinds – festivals, advertisements, music, food, personalities,

gifts, vouchers, competitions – to arouse interest. The potential exists for the expansion of the market share that Caribbean music now enjoys in extra-regional countries and this would increase the profitability of the industry for Caribbean artistes and countries.

So far neither governments nor private enterprise in the Caribbean have taken much of an interest in the marketing of cultural products. Yet they can both play a crucial role in expanding the market share that Caribbean artistes now command in foreign countries. One strategy may be for Caribbean governmental agencies or private entrepreneurs to acquire funds and negotiate with the major mass media networks to set up Caribbean radio stations on foreign soil geared to capturing a non-Caribbean audience. Traditionally, the Caribbean middle or moneyed classes have invested in retailing business and industry, while artistes have tended to be from the grassroots culture. Thus, it is not a traditional partnership that is being advocated, but such an arrangement could provide the funding to establish an aggressive presence on the American market, for example.

The Caribbean music industry has grown up largely through the efforts of talented individuals who undertook to record, produce, market and distribute through small (sometimes one-person) companies. Caribbean music now competes with the multimillion-dollar productions of the major recording studios and cannot continue to do so effectively. These big recording labels, too, have signed up the best of Caribbean talent and are now producing the reggae superstars. While this is very profitable for the individual artiste, no profits accrue to the Caribbean country. It is a whole uncharted area of possibilities that Caribbean governments and private enterprise have ignored as investments, yet non-traditional cultural products like music have the potential to contribute enormously as invisible exports to Caribbean countries.

ACTIVITY 8.1

1. Identify ONE country traditionally associated with each of the following types of music: (a) son; (b) spouge; (c) ska; (d) zouk; (e) punta; and (f) parang.
2. Outline some of the ways that reggae has been adopted and adapted by extra-regional audiences.

Culinary practices

To people in extra-regional countries Caribbean cuisine represents one more type of ethnic food that any metropolitan centre offers. It has to compete with Italian, Indian, Chinese, Greek, Polynesian and a host of other ethnic foods. However, the Caribbean migrant

communities support their restaurants and markets because, like music, to enjoy food from home is like having the best of both worlds. Curries, rice and peas, saltfish, jerk meats, coconut milk and highly seasoned foods are slowly being made known to non-Caribbean people, often through their friends from the Caribbean. There are now successful Caribbean restaurants in some of the bigger cities, and in certain areas Cuban or Haitian food may be popular, but the bulk of Americans, Canadians or Europeans have yet to be exposed to and acquire a taste for Caribbean cooking.

Religion

Many syncretic Caribbean religions show evidence of extra-regional influence, as we shall see below. In the other direction, however, the Rastafari faith, a home-grown Caribbean syncretic religion, has gone global (Box 8.3).

At the same time, the major religious denominations within Christianity, such as Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism, are going through a creolising and hybridising process. Clapping, drumming and a great deal of music of the folk variety are not typical of mainstream Christian services in Europe. While traditional hymns persist, many are now written by Caribbean persons and sung to local rhythms. The homily, delivered by local priests, uses language (intonation, gestures and expressions) in ways that only those who are accustomed to an oral language culture can produce. These are subtle creolising processes.

8.1.4 Migrant Labour

As we have already seen, Caribbean migrants, most of whom first travelled outside the region to find work, have contributed to an extensive diaspora that has had its effect on the countries that host it. Temporary, seasonal migrant labour, still an important source of income for Caribbean people, also has important effects on the hosts. Box 8.4 (page 193) looks at the phenomenon of migrant farm labour in the United States and Canada.

One of the main influences of migrant labour – both seasonal temporary work and permanent settled work – is that Caribbean workers contribute to both the societies and the economies of their host countries. Seasonal migrants, for example, provide a labour force that the host country cannot provide from its own resources, or at least not at a rate that would allow any profits to be made by the businesses that employ that force. They may not be highly skilled, but they know how to do the particular work which they undertake, and how to do it quickly and productively. This provides a service not

BOX 8.3

The Rastafari

The religious roots of Rastafari lie in Myal and Revivalism traditions and in the philosophy of Marcus Garvey (Box 14.1) concerning a black god 'Jah' and the return to Africa of black people. The Rastafari believe that they and members of the black race belong to one of the 12 tribes of Israel and that one incarnation of Jah was Jesus Christ. They reinterpret the Bible, especially the Old Testament, and believe that it is the route to spiritual freedom (from 'Babylon'). It is a millenarian movement as Rastafaris believe that Jah will personally reign on Earth, in Ethiopia, in the 'end times', and save them, his chosen people, bringing an end to their pain and suffering.

The Rastafari faith has spread throughout the world and influenced the beliefs of many non-Caribbean people. As well as its focus on black people, their history and their future, it calls for introspection about our absorption into mainstream capitalist values associated with the white man's world (Babylon).

Together with the reggae music often associated with it, the Rastafari have had a significant impact on urban cultural life in the big cities of North America and Europe. Their distinctive dreadlocks and the colours of the Ethiopian flag (red, green and gold) are the most obvious symbols of the Rastafari. A great many persons who affect the hairstyle, colours and style of language of the Rastafari do not necessarily observe their religious and dietary practices. For many in the visual and performing arts, especially, the Rastafari is an image or a role that they feel they can identify with without becoming fully-fledged 'Rastas'. For countless others, particularly men, it is just a hairstyle that is now in vogue.



Fig. 8.2 A Rastafarian

Through the lyrics of reggae, especially Bob Marley's music, the message of the Rastafarian movement has spread into non-Caribbean cultures and societies. It is a message that has received widespread acceptance, particularly among youth. Today more people worldwide are able to at least identify the term 'Jah', recognise a picture of Bob Marley and know the connection with Ethiopia and Haile Selassie.

only to their employers but also to the consumers and other businesses who buy the products. Domestic and childcare services provided by people from the Caribbean are also often (though sadly not always) highly valued personally by those who employ them, and such workers enrich the lives of the families with whom they work, often becoming a valued part of the household. And it is difficult to see how the UK National Health Service, for example, would function without the highly skilled nurses who are employed there and accepted as valued colleagues alongside home-grown personnel.

One negative influence brought by the migrant workers with respect to the local economy is that outsourcing labour to workers from less-developed countries adversely affects the labour position of workers in the host countries. This is true whether labour is recruited directly to work in the host country, or whether multinational companies (MNCs) set up factories in less-developed countries in order to take advantage of cheaper labour, business taxes and other costs. Either way, workers in developed countries can see their wages fall and their employment opportunities shrink.

BOX 8.4

Caribbean migrant farm labour

The sugar cane fields of southern Florida and the extensive orchards of the Niagara Peninsula in Canada see an annual migration of Caribbean workers to hand-pick fruit, harvest cane manually and work in tobacco factories and canneries. The field labour is hard, backbreaking work, from sunup to sundown, without overtime pay. While many come back year after year and do not seem to mind the deprivations, they are housed in substandard structures, receive the minimum of medical and other treatment, live apart from the general population and are speedily returned to the Caribbean if there are any disputes or disagreements about the work or their contracts.



Fig. 8.3 Seasonal workers

Their recruitment in the Caribbean is based on agreements between the governments of the region and the receiving (or host) nations. Their air fares are paid for by the farmers they work for, and the contract may be from six weeks to eight months, depending on the work they are contracted for. They are returned promptly to the Caribbean once their contracts expire. They are paid a lowly wage by Canadian or American standards, but it represents a substantial sum in Caribbean currency. However, they tend to spend much of it on the eve of their departure in September, buying different kinds of small appliances and gadgets, clothes and gifts, thus benefiting the local economies.

Although these migrant labour schemes involve thousands of Caribbean workers, mainly from Jamaica, with smaller numbers from the Eastern Caribbean, they are not covered by health and safety legislation, nor can they bargain collectively. They cannot move from one farm to another looking for better conditions either. There is a social distance between the workers and the farmers and townspeople, often emphasised by race and colour. The farmers counter these charges by saying that they too have to be competitive in a system of **trade liberalisation** and so the cheaper their production costs the more likely they are to stay in business.

Trade liberalisation refers to the opening up of trade internationally by reducing so-called trade barriers caused by protective tariffs on imported goods and services.

SUMMARY

Within a relationship in which extra-regional countries continue to be hegemonic, the Caribbean is still able to wield some influence in the West. Immigration issues, as well as the international narcotics trade and terrorism, are forcing the US to be more vigilant about the Caribbean because of its strategic location. As the superpower in the region, the US must necessarily be proactive or else it will be vulnerable if unwelcome events do occur. Thus, it is finding that the Caribbean must be an important ally with whom it needs to cooperate. Caribbean carnivals are

also important to extra-regional countries as they bring in millions of dollars. And Caribbean cultural and religious forms (e.g. music, Rastafari culture and the culinary arts) have increasingly penetrated extra-regional markets and cultural life in metropolitan cities. Indeed, Caribbean Studies as a cultural studies programme is growing in popularity in universities abroad. In fact, it may be true to say that the examples of hybridisation and syncretism that have emerged as Caribbean cultural expressions represent fascinating areas of study for non-Caribbean people.

8.2

The influence of extra-regional societies on the Caribbean

The Caribbean region was brought forcibly into interactions with the 'wider world' in 1492. Since then it has been locked into colonial relationships with different imperial powers. It is important to understand that the colonial subjugation suffered by the Caribbean for centuries, and the installation of dependent economies by the 'mother country', did not substantially decrease or disappear in the era of independence or even in the decades afterwards. The imperial powers gave up political ownership but exploited the structures of trade and commerce that they had set up while maintaining economic power. So for all of the past 500 years of its history the 'wider world' has had a major hold on Caribbean society and culture. Political and economic power were supported all along by psychological conditioning that the ways of the coloniser were better. Today there continues to be a nagging tension in how Caribbean people prefer to see themselves – in the image of a western person, identifying with an ethnic group such as Africanist or Amerindian organisations, or creating a hybrid identity where western values and beliefs are melded with Caribbean traditions, or other combinations and stances. The postcolonial societies of the Caribbean, then, continue to struggle with mental attitudes that revere western countries, even more so since the latter are the leaders in the new technologies, and downplay the possibilities that could arise from indigenous or local attempts at creating alternative products and lifestyles.

Thus, extra-regional influence on the countries of the Caribbean began with imperialism and colonialism and has continued to this day, whether in the form of consumption patterns, political forms, cultural expressions, education, religion or sport. However, in some respects these forms as they exist today have become hybrids, on which the peoples of the Caribbean have put their own stamp.

8.2.1 Imperialism and Colonialism

The age of imperialism began with the coming of the Europeans who conquered lands and peoples and established colonies. Spain, Britain, France, Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands carved vast empires in the Caribbean, in North, Central and South America, and in Africa, Asia, Australia and the Pacific. These imperial powers ruled their subject peoples through

a combination of military might, fear and deliberate psychological conditioning promoting the European as the superior person of culture.

Conquered territories eventually became settled colonies under European rule. During colonialism, European attitudes, ways of life, dress, language, arts and political systems became hegemonic in Caribbean societies. This means that these values were not only imposed but that there was a fairly widespread acceptance that they were indeed true – that the European was the superior power. The European country (the 'mother country') exerted power in that it was the metropole (the political and cultural centre of the colony, the hub) and the colony represented the periphery of this European country. The colony became a part of Europe (though, apart from in French territories, it was not allowed to share the national identity), but only a peripheral part of Europe.

With the exception of Haiti, all Caribbean countries were subject to centuries of cultural conditioning into Eurocentric attitudes and values. In his study of colonialism, Memmi (1991) analyses relationships between the coloniser and the colonised. He shows that the coloniser established economic patterns in which the coloniser alone profited and that this relationship was based on racism – the colonised could never become the equal of the coloniser or have a voice in determining the terms of trade. Memmi also says that the coloniser – often a minor bureaucrat in his home country – was transformed in the colony, by virtue of his race and official position, into a superior being bearing a superior culture.

In the school curriculum the history and culture of the coloniser were privileged and recounted with pride by both colonised and coloniser. Some of the colonised became like the coloniser because that was the only option that seemed to make any sense. In so doing they were rewarded in limited ways – minor and middle positions in the civil service and professional jobs (the opportunity to pursue teaching, medicine or law). In turn they suppressed their own culture by emulating and promoting a position where the European way was the 'right' way. Colonialism was a period during which European culture was promoted and the culture of the Amerindian, African or Indian was treated as **'the other'**.

Otherness is a term used to describe the experience of any group that feels marginalised.

Neocolonial and postcolonial societies

While most Caribbean countries are independent today, many question the extent to which political independence

and nationhood have really transformed the coloniser–colonised relationship. The dominant attitudes, cultural norms, mode of dress, educational, political, religious and judicial systems and trading patterns all show an orientation towards the metropole, not the periphery. The legacy of the coloniser is still hegemonic. Indigenous efforts have had to struggle to gain legitimacy (for example, syncretic and African religions such as the Rastafari) or have been virtually ignored (for example, initiatives to introduce ‘other’ languages, such as Yoruba, Swahili or Hindi, of relevance to Caribbean people).

In addition, the economic structures of today greatly threaten what ‘independence’ means. Multinational companies (MNCs), with their headquarters in the metropole, and without any serious allegiance to the Caribbean, take the bulk of their profits out of the region. The World Trade Organization (WTO) declares what is accepted practice in standards and trade regulations based largely on agreements that favour western interests. The dominance of the West in industrial, manufacturing and ICTs means that the Caribbean has to import these goods and services, leading to an imbalance in trading relationships. These relationships today between the ex-coloniser and the ex-colonised are described as neocolonialism. The West continues to wield cultural hegemony, intensified by the effects of the foreign mass media. The West also wields economic hegemony through the policies of the MNCs, the WTO and their dominance in ICTs. These relationships embroil independent Caribbean nations in a state of dependency very similar to that of the colonial era.

More subtle is the mindset towards modernisation that again privileges the metropole. There is tension or conflict among Caribbean people about where the future of the Caribbean lies. A resistant few feel that we should create our own ideas about what it means to be ‘developed’ and not import ‘templates’ (fixed solutions) and technology without first screening them to determine if they are relevant to us. Others feel that the global impact of ICTs has already locked us into a world system, so that while it may be worthwhile to desire a more indigenous way of developing that does not reflect the values and customs of the metropole, it has to be based on the products and technologies of the West. (These people would prefer some degree of symbiosis and not just slavish dependence on western ideas and technologies.) The rest wonder what the debate is about – they see life in the twenty-first century as being lived as if we are a part of the West. In the Caribbean, the more affluent, the technologically inclined and those who value western lifestyles will be using the same technologies as are used in the US,

watching the same news and cable programmes, being fans of the same R & B or hip hop artistes and probably also dressing in the same way. They will be living out the idea of development that is being lived in the ‘First World’ or metropolitan countries.

Postcolonial society is a term used to describe how these neocolonial relationships of continued dominance and subjugation affect people in the ex-colonies. The postcolonial stance actively condemns the attitude and activities of metropolitan countries in sustaining relationships with the newly independent countries that position them as **subaltern populations**. These studies

A **subaltern population** combines the ideas of ‘otherness’ and dependency.

examine how Eurocentric ideas, philosophies and ways of life are perpetuated in the ex-colonies as well as how they are resisted or recreated into symbiotic forms (Box 8.5, page 196).

ACTIVITY 8.2

Identify any radio or television stations in the Caribbean dedicated solely to indigenous programming.

1. What is the philosophy behind such an enterprise?
2. Describe the nature and type of its programmes.
3. Assess its success relative to other radio and television stations.
4. Given the nature of our neocolonial relationships, what would you suggest as enabling programming for local television and radio?

8.2.2 Trade and Consumption Patterns

The Caribbean has an outward focus where trade and consumption are concerned. A high percentage of the goods and services consumed in the Caribbean originate in western countries, particularly the US. Historically this pattern began with the mercantilist laws known as the Navigation Acts. The only goods that could be imported into the colonies had to come from Britain, or from a port controlled by Britain, on ships using a British crew. The colonies could not engage in manufacture because they acted as a source of raw materials for the industrial revolution in Britain and as a market for British manufactured goods. The mindset that Caribbean people seem to have of valuing and appreciating foreign manufactured goods initially stemmed from these mercantilist or trade laws that deliberately prohibited industrial development in the colonies.

BOX 8.5**Postcolonial societies**

In a postcolonial society the West continues to be hegemonic, and for the most part the subaltern population helps to perpetuate this dominance by choosing to conform in valuing the social, cultural and economic products of the West. Resistance is another response, seen in efforts to bring indigenous and local issues, ideas and culture onto centre stage so that Caribbean people do not continue to see their own affairs as peripheral. Other ways of accommodating this tension about what is valued between the metropole and subaltern populations include creative strategies such as hybridisation, symbiosis or creolisation (Chapter 4). Creative strategies try to integrate aspects of what is well appreciated from western culture with indigenous input. The issue of western dominance and subjugation in the postcolonial society is being played out in all areas of social life.

For example, while cable television, cinema and videos are overwhelmingly of First World origin and deepen our embeddedness in western ways, radio in the Caribbean is now somewhat of a resistant force. From being the main purveyor of western music and values, radio has reinvented itself to provide talk shows and call-in programmes emphasising topical and local events. Today it is a medium for the dissemination of local culture

– drama, music, a voice for isolated communities and even niche audiences (youth, the middle aged, ethnic communities, religious groups – all have their dedicated stations). This focus is resistant because there is a definite effort to address what Du Bois (1903) calls our ‘double consciousness’ – the experience of living both inside and outside of the West. It is a postcolonial strategy to re-centre the balance of the relationships we experience as ‘core-periphery’ by emphasising the periphery.

Similarly, postcolonial scholars study local television in the Caribbean as an experiment in creative symbiosis. Sustaining an indigenous television industry devoted solely to local productions is difficult because of the high-demand, superior and cheaper products of the West. As a result local television stations tend to tune in to the foreign mass media part of the time (namely cable stations for movies), and in their own programming emphasise local news, investigative reports, political debates, talent shows, sporting events and locally produced soap operas and comedies. However, this ‘mix’ or symbiosis still has a tendency to privilege western themes. For example, the way the news is delivered is patterned on foreign network news productions, and local soap operas are based on foreign templates but with our own unique twists.

Manufacturing

Independence did not significantly alter these patterns. New Caribbean nations began manufacturing ‘from scratch’ but did not have all the necessary resources. As a result they continued to import manufactured goods from Britain. This situation was worsened by the fact that under colonialism productive lands went into cash crops for export, with little emphasis on food production. Agriculture itself tended to be avoided because of its association with manual labour and servitude. Consequently, there was a high food import bill in the ex-colonies for wheat flour and flour-based products, tinned peas, beans and vegetables, potatoes, pork and beef products, salted fish, milk, butter and cheese. Consumption patterns that demanded foreign manufactured goods and food products created a large foreign exchange problem for new Caribbean governments.

In the 1970s and 1980s in many Caribbean countries certain items were placed on a quota system and could only be imported with special licences, while others were placed on a ‘negative list’ – they could not be

imported at all. Tariffs drove up prices, contributing to spiralling inflation. A black market flourished, where restricted items could be bought illegally, including foreign exchange. There were chronic shortages of basic food items and of other goods; red tape and bureaucracy tied up the process of importing goods and services.

These measures were resistant strategies designed to develop a local capacity in manufacturing. Local manufacture and local spending were deliberately encouraged by campaigns such as ‘buy local’ and ‘discover Jamaica’. Caribbean governments protected local industry by imposing high tariffs on textile imports from other Caribbean countries. However, because of a lack of manufacturing experience, local goods were relatively expensive and badly made. They could not compete effectively with foreign mass-produced items without the help of tariffs and monopolies. The consumer, who was forced to buy the inferior alternative, came to associate ‘local’ with cheap and shoddy and a tradition developed of shopping abroad.

Over time, many Caribbean manufacturing firms have gone out of business as trade liberalisation policies have increasingly opened the region to a flood of cheap foreign goods and services. The CSME is another resistant strategy designed to nurture and facilitate growth in local industries and trade and make a greater impact on western countries as a combined force (see §12.2.5). It will be some time before the success of this strategy can be assessed.

Consumption patterns

Europe, and more recently the US, have profoundly influenced consumption patterns in the Caribbean. Colonial policy deliberately fostered a skewed economic relationship by prohibiting manufacturing and encouraging dependency. Today most of the goods and services consumed in the Caribbean originate in the West. Although there have been resistant and creative strategies designed to reduce dependency, subaltern populations continue to regard western products as hegemonic. According to postcolonial theory, consumption patterns therefore reflect a mindset privileging western values. We can analyse this mindset in the following ways.

- **The value in believing what is foreign is better.** Whether it is music, clothes, technology or ideas, foreign or western ones are considered somehow 'better' than local alternatives. Some critics speak of this as a kind of self-hate imposed by the colonised on the coloniser, whereby the cultural forms and products of the West are believed to have more legitimacy than local forms.
- **The extreme importance associated with 'being modern'.** This value encourages us to keep up to date with the latest innovations, fashions, movies, music and personalities that are 'happening' right now in the western world, as a matter of course. People see the West as the pacesetter and we have no other option but to buy into the latest forms, models, products and gadgets.
- **Building social capital.** Brand names and designer labels are popular among youth as they confer on them the approval and envy of their peers. For those who can only manage less recognised (cheaper) brands, there is ridicule and derision. The young person who dresses exactly like his or her counterpart in the West, particularly the US which, because of geography, is always a huge presence in the Caribbean, is saying that the Caribbean does not offer any alternative fashion statement that can compete with this level of hype, glamour and attitude.

ACTIVITY 8.3

Reflect on your own attitudes to buying the goods and services of extra-regional countries. To what extent is there a preference for these products? To what extent do you use resistant, creative and conformist strategies for different consumption items?

■ The United States is the centre of the world.

There is a universal feeling that the US is a 'must-see' destination, or even an 'only see'. Many Caribbean people visit the US over and over again and feel no interest whatsoever in visiting other countries. There is an indefinable feeling of being at the 'centre of the world'. It is even said that to have a US visa, even a holiday visa, is a prestigious status symbol.

Migrant remittances

As we have seen, large numbers of Caribbean-born persons are working and sometimes living permanently abroad. It is a normal practice for these workers to send home remittances to assist family members. These remittances also constitute a valuable source of foreign exchange for the home country, as they have done for decades. However, there is some evidence that they also lead to an unhealthy dependence on the sending migrant for funds, and discourage people who receive them from finding work of their own. They are normally used for everyday expenditure rather than savings, which does not help to provide investment for Caribbean development.

The phenomenon of migration has also helped Caribbean countries by lessening the pressure for jobs and social services locally. However, migration is a negative approach to development and decolonisation. While the Caribbean cannot remove itself from the global economy and would not want to deny its nationals job opportunities in metropolitan countries, these traditions make us vulnerable to the policies of extra-regional countries.

As we saw in Chapter 2, Caribbean countries have often benefited from the temporary or permanent migration of their people, as well as influencing the societies and economies of the receiving countries. But there have also been negative effects, such as the 'brain drain' of skilled people, along with the concomitant 'brain gain' for their hosts, especially where the high achievers settle rather than returning home. Racism and other injustices also make migration an uncomfortable experience for many, especially seasonal workers (Box 8.4).

In addition, a great deal of the poverty and underdevelopment being felt in Caribbean countries

today can be attributed to the trade liberalisation policies that we have had to adopt in our globalising economy. The opening up of markets by the reduction in trade restrictions of all kinds has enabled cheaper products, including foodstuffs, to find markets in the Caribbean, thus displacing local products. Agricultural workers in poor communities have not been able to match these prices and have become further impoverished. It is these persons who are then recruited as seasonal farm labour in the developed world, sometimes to the detriment of local workforces in the host country.

8.2.3 Creative Expression and Art Forms

While Caribbean art forms (see Chapter 7) are unique in themselves, they show strong influences of extra-regional countries, particularly those of the European colonisers, as we saw in the discussion there on culinary practices. This influence, though, is masked by the creativity of Caribbean people, who have adapted the cultural forms of the coloniser into distinctive hybrid products of their own. The era after independence saw the most determined efforts to supplant or adapt the legacy of Europe with Caribbean cultural expressions. Although there is this ongoing creolising, adapting and reinventing, the US is still exerting a strong influence, in particular by targeting youth through music, fast foods, fashions and festivals. As you read this section, you may want to refer back to Chapter 7, where many of the Caribbean styles of music, art and their artists and performers are studied in depth.

Festivals

Western countries directly influence Caribbean society and culture in the mainstream Christian observances of Christmas and Easter. They are celebrated in a similar fashion owing to the foreign mass media showcasing

images of what commodities, decorations and gifts are in vogue. Christmas is especially commercialised and much of what we buy originates in the West. However, the more specifically Roman Catholic holy days such as Corpus Christi, Good Friday, Ash Wednesday and All Souls' Day (or All Saints' Day, observed by Anglicans) are not major observances in either the US or Britain, nor are they in any way commercialised. They show long-established Caribbean traditions: for example, the Corpus Christi and Good Friday processions in the streets, being anointed with ashes at the beginning of Lent and the 'lighting up' of the graves of the ancestors on 1 and 2 November. The West has had little impact, either, on the religious festivals of the Garifuna, Amerindian, Orisha, Muslim and Hindu groups. Thus, it is those religious holy days that are widely celebrated in the West, and which we also have, that tend to reflect a high degree of commercialisation.

Secular festivals and celebrations such as Valentine's Day, Old Year's Night (now more widely known as New Year's Eve because of the penetration of foreign media), Mother's Day, Father's Day and Halloween are greatly influenced by the US. Fireworks, party hats and noisemakers are now typical of a New Year's Eve celebration in the Caribbean, which was not the case a decade ago, and the traditional midnight song, 'Auld Lang Syne', is a Scottish ballad carried with Scottish migrants to North America and the Caribbean. Gifts, cards and email greetings for Valentine's Day, Mother's Day and Father's Day are virtually identical in the US and Caribbean, and to a large extent these novelty items and products originate in the US. The marketing and distribution networks of western countries, greatly enhanced by e-shopping and the cable media, influence what we purchase and how we celebrate these events – and this applies to all socioeconomic groups. To some extent local entrepreneurs are creating cards, artefacts and novelty items to rival the foreign products, and this is a symbiotic or creative response to domination. Halloween has been resisted by the lower socioeconomic classes in Caribbean society, while the more wealthy groups, possibly with closer ties to North America (real or imagined), take part in 'trick o' treat' rituals in their neighbourhood.



Fig. 8.4 Christmas nativity figures at St Williams Catholic Church in Road Town on the Caribbean island of Tortola

ACTIVITY 8.4

1. Compile a list of festivals and other observances in your territory.
2. Identify those which are overwhelmingly influenced by extra-regional countries, and those which have more local cultural significance.
3. Suggest reasons for this division.

BOX 8.6

Extra-regional influences on carnival

While carnival is today synonymous with the Caribbean, Caribbean carnivals vary across the region in terms of the time of the year they are celebrated, whether they are nationwide celebrations with maximum popular participation, and whether they originated within the historic processes and events of Caribbean society and culture. Some of these features throw light on the extent to which extra-Caribbean countries influence the festival of carnival in the Caribbean.

Some believe that carnival is a European phenomenon associated with Roman Catholicism (it precedes Lent – *carne vale*, medieval Latin meaning ‘farewell to the flesh’), though others trace its origins back to the pagan festivals of ancient Rome and Venice. For example, carnival, in both Dominica and Trinidad and Tobago is observed as a pre-Lenten celebration that was first associated with French Roman Catholic influence. Carnival timed as a pre-Lenten celebration thus has a Christian origin. However, how these festivals were celebrated in the Caribbean reflected the resistance of the oppressed people – they parodied and satirised European attitudes, dress and mannerisms under the guise of a celebration, so that the tradition of critique, social commentary and resistance was strongly entrenched in the celebration. There is therefore some opposition to the idea of carnival having European roots. Afrocentrist ideas demonstrate evidence of parallel – not just parodic – celebrations rooted in African Caribbean slave culture and before that in specifically African rituals.

Carnival in Antigua and Barbuda and Barbados (Kadooment) is celebrated to commemorate Emancipation, which took place for most territories on 1 August 1834. Whether as a carnival or not, most of the other Caribbean territories celebrate Emancipation with a public holiday on 1 August either as Emancipation Day, August Monday or August Holiday. The themes of resistance and anti-white sentiments were also a part of these celebrations. In both Antigua and Barbuda and Barbados, which are major tourist destinations, the traditional August Monday and carnival celebrations have taken on a more elaborate portrayal, deliberately courting American and European tourists. Thus, the carnival celebrations in Caribbean islands where tourism is a great income earner have been influenced by extra-regional countries – in what events are staged, where they are located, how they are packaged to be of interest to the tourist and the extent to which the

festival has been commercialised (admission for shows, selling the rights to reproduce certain events to the foreign media, the production of videos and CDs and other memorabilia, etc.).

In the elaborate rituals of carnival celebrations in Trinidad and Tobago, where there is mass participation on an unprecedented scale, there is still evidence of the influence of extra-regional countries, as the following examples show.

- **Technology.** Computer programs help to create images of costumes, foreign materials are sourced to build those costumes (whether fabric, wire, feathers, beads or sequins) and the latest developments in sound technology are evident in music recordings and live entertainment. Of late, the King and Queen of the Bands’ portrayals require elaborate pyrotechnics and special engineering effects that depend heavily on imported gadgets and even expertise.
- **Development of ideas.** The mas bands are inspired by themes that range from sci-fi Hollywood representations and Broadway productions to abstract portrayals of globalisation, capitalism, oppression, ecological awareness and gender issues. (There is a growing presence of gay/homosexual groups portraying sections in bands, and they are usually from abroad, though having a Caribbean heritage.)
- **Built structures.** We see large floats being presented on the road (with air-conditioned rooms), reminiscent of the traditional carnivals in New Orleans and Italy. This goes against the commonly accepted local understanding that being in a mas band means that you are an active participant, and even if you are King of the Band you are able to carry your own costume.
- **Music that is exported.** The traditional calypso, which is primarily about social commentary and is difficult for the extra-regional visitor to understand because it portrays specific local events and controversies, is sidelined in favour of the new wave, jump and wine soca ditties.

To a certain extent extra-regional countries are influencing the way that the Trinidad and Tobago carnival is packaged and presented because it is now a multimillion-dollar earner and relies on the foreign tourist to make it a commercial success. No longer is it a national celebration only; major allowances are made for visitors from foreign countries and these subtly influence the festival.

On the whole we see the influence of extra-regional countries on Caribbean festivals when there is a significant commercial aspect to the celebration. Even carnival, that most typical Caribbean festival, shows evidence of extra-regional influence as it becomes increasingly commercialised (Box 8.6)

Music

Caribbean music is known for its resistant themes, undoubtedly springing from the oppressive history of colonialism, bonded labour and social stratification. No wonder, then, that the most successful musical forms generated by the British Caribbean – namely reggae, calypso and the steelband (Box 8.7) – originated in the tenement yards of Jamaica and among the shanty towns and urban poor in Trinidad.

Research mini-project

Choose ONE of the following – the son music of Cuba or zouk music of the French Caribbean, Dominica and St Lucia – and research the influence of extra-regional countries on the development of this musical form.

Theatre arts

While theatre arts of the folk variety were always a part of Caribbean cultural life, these were relegated largely to the village or community setting in the colonial era, taking to the streets only during festivals and celebrations. Plays, dramatic performances, pantomimes and musical productions modelled on British or American theatres were the legitimate, colonial version of authentic theatre or 'high culture'. The independence era, with its themes of decolonisation, liberation and nationhood, saw the conscious incorporation of the wide variety of Caribbean cultural forms into indigenous theatre productions. Local plays and comedies were written and produced; there were re-enactments of historical events using stick-fighting, storytelling, folk songs and dances; and there were also creative, choreographed dance productions staged by the newly established local dance companies, such as the National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica.

Even though there was this push to embrace Caribbean art forms and ideas in theatre, the influence of extra-regional countries was very evident in how Caribbean theatre developed. Language was a major issue as there were some who felt that the native patois and dialects were much too difficult for others to comprehend and that the art form would not develop because of this; others felt that to be authentic and truly expressive of

Caribbean life Standard English had to be abandoned. The relationship with extra-regional countries, too, was a common theme in productions within indigenous theatre. These themes were inevitable in an era of decolonisation – conflicts and tensions over issues of identity, discrimination based on race, colour and class, as well as the interrelationships being forged between the diverse groups brought by the British. The writings of Rex Nettleford (§7.3.1) of Jamaica and Derek Walcott (Box 8.8), Nobel Laureate from St Lucia, among many others, show the preoccupation of Caribbean people with this quest for identity. They interrogate in different ways how the white man's world and the legacy of colonialism could prove comfortable to a people who only have fragments of their own past and culture upon which to build an identity.

Theatre arts, then, are not only a form of entertainment but a serious attempt to confront Caribbean people with the issues and problems of their society and culture. This can be done through humour, tragedy, musical productions, dance and even arts-in-education programmes for schools. Through the theatre people have an opportunity to experience life in all its many facets – as a participant (for there are many productions where the audience is involved), as one who empathises with certain characters and situations, and as food for thought.

Caribbean theatre arts have grown into a creative adaptation of western styles and genres largely by incorporating Caribbean languages, local musical rhythms, the oral tradition, call-and-response episodes, folklore characters (for example, the moko jumbies), ritual drama such as mas or street theatre, and the use of picon (repartee that is stinging in its wittiness) and *double entendre* (saying one thing apparently innocently but meaning another, usually of a sexual nature). Derek Walcott is a very good example of a Caribbean dramatist.

Popular theatre

Distinctions between professional theatre and street theatre are beginning to be blurred through the advent of *popular theatre*. These are productions which are put on in a theatre and present internationally acclaimed plays (as in high culture) and musicals or folklore, but in a way that appeals to a mass audience (and therefore forms part of popular culture). Popular theatre brings folklore into an urban place and it Caribbeanises what was normally presented as formal, western drama.

In the Caribbean, theatre and folklore together express the cultural contributions of the major ethnic groups – the Europeans and Africans – though persons of all ethnicities participate in some way. All productions today, be they in the formal style of being staged in a

BOX 8.7

The steelband – extra-regional influence

Britain and the Second World War had an impact on the evolution of the steelband movement. On the days of the various Allied victories in Europe, South East Asia and Japan, the steelbands paraded through the streets, winning the approval of the people, and when peace was restored the steelband and carnival became synonymous. The names chosen for the bands reflected Caribbean people's identification with the war and with Hollywood images depicting stories told against the backdrop of war and even for 'western' or cowboy movies. Major steelbands were Tokyo, Red Army, Invaders, Desperadoes, Renegades, Tripoli and Casablanca. In keeping with the themes of war, resistance and heroism, the steelbandsman acted as a grassroots 'soldier', a rough and tough character who defended his (there were few or no women playing pan at this time) band with fists and knives. The meetings of Red Army and Tokyo at any road junction on carnival days were infamous for the blood, injury and mayhem that ensued. The 'captain' or leader of the band was a community strongman who demanded unquestioned loyalty. His devotion to the band was supreme, often transcending his own domestic responsibilities, and like Rudolph Charles and 'Thunderbolt' Williams of Desperadoes, they were powerful folk heroes.

Today many of those same steelbands are still top contenders for the annual Panorama competition, and the typical mas adopted by the steelbands on carnival days continues to be either the fancy sailor or some other military costume, reminiscent of the beginnings of the steelband movement in the war years. However, those playing pan today come from all ethnic and socioeconomic groups, both men and women play (as do schoolchildren) and students and pan enthusiasts come from the US and Europe annually to play with a steelband for the carnival season. The seriousness with which western countries have grasped the steelband and the innovations they are making in sound technology, together with the fact that they enter steelbands at the annual pan-jazz festival in Trinidad and Tobago, is driving a deeper national and government interest in the instrument. More competitions are sponsored, school steelbands are being encouraged, and there are developmental plans for the national steelband association, PanTrinbago.

Today the steelband is known as an 'orchestra'. This term was a slightly later development, dating from the mid-1940s and given 'respectability' by the visit of the Trinidad All Steel Percussion Orchestra (TASPO) to the 1951 Festival of Britain in

London. The orchestra is modelled on the classical European philharmonic orchestra, where there may be as many as 100 players in different sections.

The steelpan is a percussion instrument tuned to produce different sounds, similar to the different instruments of a conventional orchestra, so that in any large steelband there will be pans grouped in sections – tenors (soprano), double seconds, cello pans (baritone), double tenors (alto), guitar pans, four pans, double second (tenor), triple cello (baritone), tenor bass, six bass, nine bass and quadrophonic pans. The music is arranged and scored, and for formal concerts there may be a conductor. All kinds of music are played – calypso, soca, reggae, jazz, rhythm and blues, and even classical symphonies. One difference worth noting is that many pan players come from poor backgrounds, or are sometimes unemployed persons, who learn their music by ear as they have never learned to read music.



Fig. 8.5 Woman playing steel drums in a competition

BOX 8.8

Derek Walcott and theatre arts

Derek Walcott was born in St Lucia on 23 January 1930 and won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1992. His most highly acclaimed works are:

- Poetry collections: *In a Green Night* (1964), *Sea Grapes* (1976), *Another Life* (1973) and *Omeros* (1989).
- Plays: *Ti-jean and his Brothers* (1958), *Dream on Monkey Mountain* (1970), *The Joker of Seville* (1974) and *Odyssey* (1993).

Walcott can be described as a postcolonial playwright as his works focus on the conflict in Caribbean society and culture between what has been inherited by blood and memory and what has been inherited through colonialism and imperialism. As with other Caribbean postcolonial writers, there is a preoccupation with trying to describe Caribbean life and culture – teetering as it does between the values and aesthetics of the metropole and the periphery. People in the diaspora experience complex identities as they actually live in the metropole, bringing the contrasts, conflicts and accommodations between a western lifestyle and a Caribbean lifestyle directly and urgently into their own everyday lives. And people in the Caribbean of mixed heritage (including Walcott himself, who says that they are ‘poisoned by the blood of both’) teeter between the metropole and ‘fractured peripheries’ (belonging to different Caribbean ethnicities). It is this mixture of identities and how it plays out in each person’s social location that brings Walcott’s work out of a simple metropole–periphery model to show

the hybridity of identities, both in the metropole and in the periphery among Caribbean people.

Walcott uses Standard English, West Indian dialects and patois in his works. He incorporates aspects of Caribbean folk culture into his theatre productions – storytelling, singing, dancing, calypso and mas and street theatre – and at the same time excels in his use of traditional western literary devices such as metaphor and poetry. This mixture of western and Caribbean heritage comes sharply to the fore in his great epic poem *Omeros* (Greek for Homer), where he rewrites the *Iliad*, the ancient work of the Greek poet Homer, and in his play *Odyssey*, again rewriting another of Homer’s epics. These ambitious works bring the ancient Greek legends, torments and conflicts right into the Caribbean present to address issues of rootlessness, banishment and exile relevant to Caribbean people of African, Amerindian, Indian and European descent.



Fig. 8.6
Derek Walcott

theatre or on village grounds, display some element of syncretism between these two main influences.

The West still plays a pivotal role in the growth and development of the poets, playwrights, actors, dramatists, writers and novelists whose works are often produced for the theatre. Many of our famous writers and playwrights felt compelled to leave the Caribbean in order to live among and work and perform for people for whom the arts were important. In the Caribbean, weaned on theatre that was an imitation of Europe’s, people did not initially think it was much more than amusement, for it did not explain their lives meaningfully. Even today it is the worldwide acclaim and prestigious awards given to writers and playwrights such as Derek Walcott, Vidia Naipaul, Earl Lovelace and Jamaica Kincaid that has helped to spread their reputation here in the Caribbean.

The influence of extra-regional countries, for example, is significant in Walcott’s work, even returning to the great classics of western literature to creolise and adapt them to a Caribbean present. He uses the English language superbly and does not seem to feel the tension that other writers report about using the language of the coloniser. At the same time he is adept at incorporating picing, sexual innuendos, fables, jokes and playful puns typical of Caribbean language. Walcott’s work brings a certain perspective to bear on the usual questions that the theatre arts present to Caribbean audiences, and is an attempt at a positive resolution of these tensions and identify conflicts, not by choosing any model or specific identity, but by understanding the range of traditions that have been bequeathed to us.



Fig. 8.7 Earl Lovelace



Fig. 8.8 Jamaica Kincaid

ACTIVITY 8.5

1. Find out more about Earl Lovelace and/or Jamaica Kincaid and write a short biography with a section describing the extra-regional influences on their work.
2. For ONE other Caribbean playwright, poet, dramatist or writer (apart from Walcott), read what critics and reviewers have said about his or her work and identify any extra-regional influences on these works.

Visual arts

In a similar way, Caribbean **visual arts** have derived to

Visual art refers to works produced by drawing, painting, sculpting and related activities.

some extent from western models. Artists and sculptors are trained in the same methods as their western counterparts, and they follow the same ideas. However, like writers and dramatists they have used their work to develop cultural expressions more relevant to the Caribbean. The history of art in the region, with styles largely adopted from the colonial masters, tended to depict Caribbean life in colourful, static portrayals, for example of market scenes or landscapes. That form of art continues but contemporary art is more varied in that art forms may overlap and even integrate other types of artistic expression such as live performances of dance and music. The African and Asian heritages of Caribbean art are also now being explored by mainstream artists, where once these were valued only by the artisanal craftworkers and self-taught practitioners from lower socioeconomic groups.

Modern artists relate their work to the society in which they live. They may celebrate and promote it by

painting picturesque scenes of Caribbean life. Or they may attempt to develop awareness in the viewer of the idea that cultural life has meanings going unexplored and it is incumbent upon everyone to look deeper into their present. One of the purposes of art is communication, but the artist is not only concerned with how the viewer receives the work. In the act of communicating ideas, feelings and perceptions the artist looks for novel ways of transforming the message by using objects differently, or applying a range of textures and materials, or he or she might deliberately move away from popular models or understandings of what is considered 'art', for example using **installations**. Through these processes of

An artistic **installation** relies for its effect on the combination and placement of various objects and artworks in a particular place.

innovation artists seek to bring about cultural change by impacting upon our ideas of art and beauty, as well as by presenting us with new ways of looking at ourselves. This is just as true of today's western artists as it is of Caribbean, indigenous Australian or any other creative practitioner. But Caribbean artists no longer feel constrained to follow western models of art or artistic techniques because these are considered 'better' than indigenous understandings of art.

Many Caribbean artists have now moved away from traditional watercolours and oil paintings to adopt other materials such as wood, metal, glass and paper, and may even develop 'art' around an object such as an urn. The content, form and techniques vary widely and so the products are highly individualistic, there being no 'school' of Caribbean art. In Chapter 7 we looked at some of the important artists who have been born in the Caribbean. Although affected by colonialism and other non-regional influences, they have all striven to find an authentic Caribbean 'voice'.

◆ Choose one visual artist whose work was highlighted in Chapter 7 and assess the influences that can be seen in his or her output. How has this particular artist aspired to a Caribbean rather than non-regional style?

8.2.4 Education

The colonial era

The development of education in the history of the English-speaking Caribbean mirrors the colonial relationship between the region and the metropole. In Britain

education was provided for the rich and the poor, but it was a differentiated education, and this was reflected in the Caribbean colonies, especially during the period of slavery. In the Caribbean the racial division between rich and poor also affected education.

In Britain, the rich were educated at home in the early years by tutors and governesses. Only a few girls went to school, though their education was often continued under their governesses, and some became very accomplished. At 8 or 9 years old the boys were sent to elite boarding schools and then to universities. In the Caribbean, formal education, or education of any kind for the enslaved population, was discouraged or even forbidden, a policy that was probably used as a means for social control, since literacy might have allowed the slaves to discover ideas about freedom and empowerment. The sons of the planters, however, were sent to England to be educated, so for a long time there was little in the way of a formal education system in the colonies. Those schools that were established were for whites only and occasionally for near-whites or coloured, as the levels of miscegenation grew, and the teachers in them were brought in from Britain. This was a classical education like that provided in the **classicist curriculum** of public

The **classicist curriculum** focused mainly on so-called 'classical' subjects such as Latin, Greek, Maths and English literature.

schools in England. Even the textbooks were the same ones as those used in England. Many of these elite schools of the colonial whites are now the elite schools of today.

There was, however, quite a lot of variation across the region. In Trinidad, for example, which did not become a British colony until 1797, the oldest surviving elite secondary schools date from only the middle of the nineteenth century – after slavery had been abolished. In Guyana, Queen's College was established in 1844 and Bishop's High School in 1870. But both Barbados and Jamaica have schools dating back more than 250 years – and Combermere School in Barbados celebrated its 300th anniversary in 1995.

In the Act to abolish slavery the British Parliament set up the **Negro Education Grant**. Elementary education was now expanded to include the children of ex-slaves, though there was still restricted access to secondary and tertiary education. Thus began a massive elementary education programme for the poor. Quakers, Moravians, Baptists, Methodists and, later, Anglican missionaries built churches and schools to administer education to the ex-slaves across the Caribbean. A system of denominational schools grew up, run by Europeans with a European

focus which still informs primary education today. This education was designed to be non-denominational yet Christian, and it was similar to the basic instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic (known as the three Rs) that was given to children in Britain at the time. The Bible was used to instil Christian values. The whole purpose behind making elementary schooling compulsory in Britain was to combat child labour and the problem of street children. The curriculum was used to transmit British values, traditions and customs which would 'civilise' the children of the lower classes in Britain. This was also its purpose for the ex-slaves and their children in the Caribbean.

Teachers at the elementary level came from the ranks of the poor. They were often the children of ex-slaves, and were employed as *monitors* when they left school. The monitor system was an economical teacher training measure where bright and promising students stayed on at school as pupil teachers, with no or little salary. They learned 'on the job' from their own teachers, but had to sit rigorous examination papers to make sure that they had been trained adequately. Where teacher training institutions existed, master teachers came out from England to teach in them.

Secondary schools – called 'high schools' or 'colleges' – were reserved for the affluent. The seamless approach we have today that makes primary, secondary and tertiary form part of one education system is a fairly recent innovation. Secondary school teachers were university graduates or had advanced qualifications obtained in Britain. Gradually their ethnicity changed as local whites and coloureds went on to universities abroad and returned as teachers. Their 'qualification' to teach in the Caribbean, as in Britain, lay in their specialist knowledge of the classical curriculum. In the elementary schools there were mainly poor black students and teachers. At college level, where school fees were paid, the students and teachers were rich and white. Needless to say, elementary schools had low status and the colleges had high status, a situation that to some degree still pertains.

A number of trends from the colonial era continue to echo in the ideas and practices in education today.

- Most educational materials were written by British teachers in the Caribbean, which encouraged socialisation into British values and traditions. This is changing, but the socialisation itself is proving difficult to overcome.
- University education was seen as a prerequisite for teaching in elite schools. Teacher training, which would have given expertise in the job itself, was not thought as important.

- The prestige of secondary schools, with their restricted access, has led to competition for places and therefore an almost hysterical pressure on 10 and 11 year olds. This follows the nineteenth-century tradition where poor black, bright boys were coached for the few scholarships available in the high schools. It also tends to encourage people to value only what is taught for examinations.
- The curriculum is still centred on academic disciplines as they were handed down to the Caribbean from the UK system of education. This is in defiance of the recognised educational value of learning across the disciplines. Caribbean Studies is a noted exception to this rule!
- Parents still value the denominational schools, partly because the elite schools have often come from that background. These schools, it is believed, will deliver a better education than the lower-status ones, and the most able students therefore aspire to attend an elite school. Parents may also trust denominational schools to instil the kinds of values and morals that they want to see in their children – but that may be another form of postcolonialism.

Language

Under colonialism, children in the Anglophone Caribbean were taught ‘correct’ English, that is the English of their colonisers, and many parents even today feel that this Standard English is what should be taught in schools, as it is used in official documents. However, the linguistic picture across the Caribbean is very complex, and many educationists and policymakers believe that schooling should reflect this. In non-Anglophone countries, also, there is great diversity of language.

When one is speaking generally, it is easy to think of a Caribbean country in terms of one language, and the European language of the colonial power at that. While the European languages persist – for example, English, Dutch, French and Spanish are the official languages of various Caribbean countries – the reality is that in many cases they are rarely spoken in the European form. They are the languages for official business, for written communication and for formal situations. In a country like Barbados, where English has been thought to be the main language for centuries, today Barbadian English is acknowledged as the first language. Standard English is mainly for written communication and specialised contexts (see Chapter 4).

The question is whether the official language (e.g. Standard English in Anglophone countries, French in the overseas *départements*) should be used in schools, or whether there are arguments for using creole versions of these languages, or even pidgin.

Curriculum reforms

The curriculum remained a bone of contention throughout the early twentieth century. Various commissions on education sent out by Britain made efforts to introduce agriculture and technical-vocational education to supplant the classicist curriculum favoured by secondary schools. This was almost identical to the curriculum in the most prestigious British secondary schools, known as ‘public schools’. This **overt curriculum** reinforced the **hidden curriculum**, which in this instance immersed students in

The **overt curriculum** is that which is explicitly and openly taught.

The **hidden curriculum** refers to the underlying unspoken assumptions beneath what is taught, including school organisation, rules, etc.

a set of relations that undervalued their own history and culture. All persons, white, black or coloured, had to uphold British culture in a colonial society.

The colonies, however, needed their citizens to have a more practical education, in order to be more self-sufficient in food as well as to have a supply of architects, masons, plumbers, carpenters and builders to assist in infrastructure and development. While some of this ‘practical’ orientation was adopted by primary schools, parents persistently opposed this kind of education for their children. They did not see a ‘practical’ education securing higher-paying, more prestigious jobs for their children. The whites and the few upper-class coloureds and blacks who held high ranks in the public service and the government saw the curriculum in terms of instilling British values and fulfilling the needs of the colony; parents, teachers and students saw the curriculum in terms of social mobility.

After independence, the new governments promised to increase equality in education by freeing up access to the secondary level. Educational expansion increased with loans secured from international agencies. Even with this expansion, the secondary schools could not accommodate all those who wished to access them. While most Caribbean countries achieved *Universal Primary Education (UPE)* in the middle decades of the twentieth century, *Universal Secondary Education (USE)* continued to be elusive. High-stakes examinations such as the **Common Entrance (CE)**, were used to sort and

The **Common Entrance** was an examination taken by students at the end of primary school to evaluate their performance and allocate them to different categories of secondary school, the most prestigious schools receiving the most gifted students.

allocate students to different types of secondary schools. The CE examination remained popular in the Caribbean, although it was phased out in state education in the UK after the war.

At the same time, a number of curriculum reforms attempted to remove extra-regional influence from education, a process known as the **indigenisation** of education.

Indigenisation occurs when policies privilege native or local concerns or knowledge over those of extra-regional countries such as the former colonial power.

- Textbooks began to be written by Caribbean authors so that students would have indigenous materials to support a deeper understanding of their region. Today's textbooks are almost exclusively written by Caribbean educators and writers with experience of the Caribbean education system and local culture.
- A Caribbean-based examinations body was set up as part of regional integration in the post-independence period (see Chapter 12). The **Caribbean Examinations Council** (CXC) published new

The **Caribbean Examinations Council** is an examining body set up in the 1970s by the countries of the Anglophone Caribbean region to give a Caribbean focus to the region's curriculum.

Caribbean-based syllabuses to replace the GCE 'O' and 'A' levels set by Cambridge and London examination syndicates. The CAPE syllabuses and examinations are part of this move. This was a bold and necessary step in changing the emphasis from what the British thought we should know to what Caribbean people wanted children to be taught for the purposes of development and change in the region.

- The change to CXC examinations led to a secondary school curriculum that is fostering regionalism rather than separatism in the Caribbean, since all students in Caribbean countries sitting CXC exams have studied the same curriculum. This was predicated on a future where the region would become the focus for development rather than the striving of each isolated Caribbean country.
- Sixth-form students were offered new subjects such as the compulsory Caribbean Studies and Communication Studies. More practical qualifications were included, such as Geometrical and Mechanical Engineering, Electrical and Electronic Technology, Food and Nutrition and Art and Design, which relied less on academic and intellectual attainment.

- There was a major change of assessment when examinations began to include a *School Based Assessment (SBA)* component. This *formative* type of assessment encourages students to think divergently and critically and focus on Caribbean issues. It also gives some power to teachers in how their students are to be assessed, and fosters cooperation on a piece of work between teacher and pupil over a sustained period.

The information age

The advent of modern telecommunications technology, including personal computers and in particular the rise of the Internet and World Wide Web, has brought about what many commentators refer to as an 'information age'. In this new age, anyone with access to the Internet can have information on any number of topics at their fingertips. Learning in the twenty-first century has therefore the potential to be radically altered by new knowledge, equipment, tools and software. Through a number of different options, such as distance learning, and especially online modalities (§10.8.3), the Caribbean can make great strides in increasing the percentage of the population achieving a tertiary education qualification.

ACTIVITY 8.6

1. Conduct research in your own country to determine whether the service providers in tertiary education are local, regional or international. Which of them offer fully online credentials? Are there any problems with foreign degree providers in the Caribbean?
2. Engage in a discussion with your classmates, friends and teachers about the use or lack of use of Internet technologies in the secondary classroom. Choose one subject area and show how teaching and learning can be improved by the use of web-based resources and technologies.

Education For All

In the twenty-first century, Caribbean countries have bought into the United Nations' vision of *Education For All*, a reform movement that was born out of a concern for development, and saw as essential a situation where all persons in a country have some form of education, whether it is formal schooling, or informal, distance or vocational learning. Education For All targets all those who may be at a disadvantage with regard to education, including not only the poor but the disabled, drop-out students, the elderly and those in prison.

In spite of all this, many teachers feel that in schools themselves nothing much has changed. Selection of

students by ability and academic achievement, the prevalence of streaming and the creaming-off of the most able into elite schools continues to affect their labour-market chances. These practices are echoes of the colonial system of education, although in most of the former colonial countries they are long gone. Schools are also open to influences from US educational ideas, not all of which are suitable for the Caribbean.

8.2.5 Political Influences

Any study of the influences of extra-regional countries on the politics of the Caribbean must acknowledge the US as the superpower in the region. Since the Caribbean is strategically placed to allow access to US territory, the region is closely monitored for any anti-US sentiments. Castro's long-standing communist regime in Cuba, virtually on Miami's doorstep, makes the US highly paranoid about any communist rhetoric elsewhere in the Caribbean. Hence, the US denounced the Bishop regime in Grenada, withdrew much-needed aid, entered into talks with Gairy, but could not do much more until internal upheaval gave the excuse to mount an invasion and restore the rule of law (that is, the electoral process). For strategic and geopolitical reasons at the time (this was before the Berlin Wall came down and the Cold War ended), the US needed Caribbean countries to be essentially conservative outposts bound to the US through a web of influence – aid programmes, loans and trade agreements.

However, in terms of our governance systems, the extra-regional influences are all European. In the 1960s and 1970s Anglophone Caribbean countries were achieving their independence from Britain and the model of government that was installed was the *Westminster system* (see below). In fact, this happened throughout the British Empire and today many of these independent former British colonies, with similar systems of government, make up the Commonwealth, which still has the Queen of England as its head.

The Westminster system of government

The Westminster system is a democratic system of government which recognises the rule of law. It is a form of parliamentary government where the prime minister is appointed by the parliamentary body. There is no clear separation of powers between the executive and the legislature. Moreover, the head of state has only ceremonial powers. In the Caribbean there are many constitutional monarchies where the British monarch is officially the head of state represented by a Governor General, as in Belize, Barbados and Jamaica. Trinidad

and Tobago, Guyana and Dominica have a republican form of parliamentary government where a president is head of state, but it is still largely a ceremonial post.

One way of understanding the Westminster system is to compare it with a different form of government, such as the presidential system in the US (see Box 8.1). For example, in the parliamentary democracies of the Caribbean the prime minister is not elected by the population at large (except as a constituency MP) but automatically assumes that office as the political leader of the party winning the most seats in parliament.

In the era of decolonisation the Westminster form of government was imposed on the British Caribbean without much input from the people. Two houses of parliament were installed – the Lower House consisting of elected members and an unelected Upper House, comprising appointed members chosen from the winning party, the opposition and independent individuals. This was similar to the way in which the British Parliament was organised. In some territories there is only one assembly – this is called a *unicameral* arrangement. The latter has some advantages, especially in a country with a small population, but does not allow for much if any separation of powers or roles between the executive and the legislature. Table 8.1 shows some of the variations today across the Anglophone Caribbean.

Table 8.1 Variations of the Westminster system in selected Caribbean countries

Caribbean Country	Lower House	Upper House
Antigua and Barbuda	House of Representatives	Senate
Barbados	House of Assembly	Senate
Belize	House of Representatives	Senate
Dominica	The Assembly	no upper house
Guyana	National Assembly	no upper house
Jamaica	House of Representatives	Senate
St Lucia	House of Assembly	Senate
St Vincent	The Assembly	no upper house
Trinidad and Tobago	House of Representatives	Senate

It is remarkable that in the transition from colonialism to independence (which was a rushed affair in many cases) Caribbean people were able to move so smoothly from anti-democratic colonial rule to the rule of law. In Latin America, and even the Hispanic Caribbean, this did not always happen so easily, while former British territories were able to form stable governments with few deviations. The much-reported election fraud of the Burnham years in Guyana, the 1970s (Black Power) and 1990s (Black Muslims) political uprisings in Trinidad and Tobago and the takeover of Grenada by Maurice Bishop (together with his overthrow and the subsequent invasion by US troops – see Box 8.9) are perhaps the most serious incidents in the British Caribbean where the rule of law was compromised.

However, after more than 30 years of independence, there are increasing criticisms of the Westminster

system, which is said to seriously disadvantage certain sectors of the society. Caribbean politics developed along ethnic and partisan lines, with prime ministers and political parties holding on to power for years on end, thus excluding other groups. The main issue is that the executive and the legislature are not separate. This compromises democracy because the prime minister may become all powerful, and it elevates one political party to receive all rewards and honours. Another difficulty is that at independence the different ethnic groups brought to the Caribbean by the colonial powers were left to work out their relationships with one another. The ways they sought to do this often followed lines of ethnic or partisan politics. Once a party got into power it consolidated its position by excluding other groups. This has been the trend in most Caribbean countries from independence until the present day.

BOX 8.9

Operation Urgent Fury



Fig. 8.9 Eric Gairy



Fig. 8.10 Maurice Bishop

Eric Gairy was Chief Minister in Grenada before independence and prime minister from 1967 to 1979. The Gairy years were plagued by poverty, financial mismanagement and corruption. The regime was propped up by the Mongoose Gang, a group of thugs who terrorised Gairy's opponents, making him into a virtual dictator, though he became increasingly eccentric and preoccupied with UFOs. His administration was eventually toppled, with little popular resistance, by a coup d'état in 1979 led by Maurice Bishop of the NJM or New Jewel Movement (otherwise known as the Joint Endeavour for Welfare, Education and Liberation).

The revolutionary government of Maurice Bishop was based on principles derived from the Black Power movement sweeping the US and the Caribbean in the 1970s, and the socialist ideas of Fidel Castro and Ché Guevara. Close relationships were established with Cuba, Grenada benefiting from the influx of expertise in health, construction and agriculture, and the development of cooperatives and investment in agro-industries. The economy was open to investment from abroad and private enterprise. A number of grassroots councils encouraged people to participate in politics. However, internal discord between Bishop, a moderate within his own movement, and Bernard Coard, an extreme Leninist, and Bishop's inability to deal with this challenge to his authority, led to strife and infighting. In October 1983 Coard and his supporters overthrew the government; Bishop and two of his ministers were executed and others arrested.

The prospect of an extreme communist government being established in Grenada led US President Ronald Reagan to approve *Operation Urgent Fury* – the invasion of Grenada by US Marines, establishing US rule of the island, expelling Cubans and arresting a wide cross section of Grenadians, including members of the government. It is remarkable that Grenadian and Cuban troops were able to fend off the US Marines until that force grew to some 5000. The leaders of the coup were tried and sentenced to death, but in 1991 their death sentences were commuted to life imprisonment.

ACTIVITY 8.7

1. After researching the issue, list examples of Caribbean prime ministers and political parties that have remained in power for decades.
2. Suggest why Caribbean people as voters tend to be 'diehard' supporters of one particular political party.
3. Suggest one approach to power-sharing that can be introduced in Caribbean countries to redress some of the problems of the Westminster system.

Electoral processes

In a representative democracy, members win their seats by following the rule of law and observing the electoral processes associated with installing a government – political parties put forward eligible candidates for each constituency, they campaign on various issues to the electorate, they 'face the polls' (that is, they allow the electorate to vote or not vote for them without intimidation) and if elected they accept their seats in parliament to represent their constituents, just as happens in European and North American democracies.

Although elections in the Caribbean seem to be free and fair, some political commentators maintain that elections are just one aspect of democracy. They point out that political processes and institutions as developed in the Caribbean tend to promote only the ruling party and opportunities for alternative opinions are slim. True participation of all social classes and ethnic groups is not encouraged. The exercise of a citizen's right to vote every five years is seen as the most minimal form of participating in a democracy, and from time to time the electorate shows its disillusionment with politicians by low voter turnout. This skewed understanding of democracy results from the phenomenal powers bestowed on the prime minister under the Westminster system of government. For example:

- The prime minister has the power of appointment to the cabinet and government ministries, to state boards and to various strategic committees and companies.
- The prime minister can dissolve parliament at will (though a system of fixed-term parliaments lasting five years was instituted in 2010 in the UK).
- The prime minister and cabinet can propose a bill and, as members of the legislature, they also vote on it. Thus there is a close tie between the executive and the legislature.
- There is not much room for independent opinion and dissent, either within the ruling party or from the opposition.

Stemming from these wide-ranging powers of the prime minister, the Caribbean has experienced a number of problems:

- A sitting prime minister can remove opposition members and supporters from key areas or appointments and replace them with his or her own supporters and party favourites.
- Any party that is relegated to the opposition knows that its members will not be allowed any key appointments and its opportunities in politics will be severely curtailed. This has been described as the winner-takes-all phenomenon of the Westminster system.
- Platform politics becomes an all-out, dog-eat-dog ruthless fight, largely based on character assassination, where the lines between political parties are drawn by hate and ethnic identification.
- If a party is based on ethnic identity of commitment to a particular ideology or tradition, and it does not win an election, then it knows that it will almost never do so because of the powers of the party in power to exclude it. If such a group represents a significant number of citizens, they will feel a sense of marginalisation and frustration.

The way the Westminster system works in the Caribbean, therefore, is that the people vote every five years but have few other opportunities to participate on issues affecting the country. Parliamentarians themselves are constrained to follow the lead of their prime minister, and the close associations between the executive and the legislature means that the latter largely carries out the wishes of the former.

Postcolonial politics

The postcolonial reality is that all groups (not only dominant ones, but subaltern groups too) are organising and mobilising. Today in each country – more so in the heterogeneous societies and cultures of Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago (and in Suriname, where the Dutch also left different ethnic groups to fend for themselves) – people think of themselves as relating to the state in different ways. For example, people who think of themselves as Indo-Trinidadians may have quite different feelings to those who consider themselves to be Indians, or merely Trinidadians. And that is just among one ethnic group.

The dismantling of colonialism is continuing to take place as the political system established by the British for the Caribbean is now under attack from different groups within Caribbean society. In the postcolonial societies and cultures of the Caribbean, previously excluded groups are calling for constitutional reform, often advocating some

form of power-sharing. However, the ways that Caribbean people will work out their political systems are likely to be some variant of the Westminster system, rather than, say, adopting the US model, as this will cause less stress to society than adopting something radically new.

The influence of migratory labour

The migration experience today (particularly seasonal migration), while seemingly beneficial, continues the syndrome of dependency on extra-regional countries. Moreover, a great deal of the poverty and underdevelopment being felt in Caribbean countries today can be attributed to the trade liberalisation policies that we have had to adopt in our globalising economy. The opening up of markets by the reduction in trade restrictions of all kinds has enabled cheaper products, including foodstuffs, to find markets in the Caribbean, thus displacing local products. Agricultural workers in poor communities have not been able to match these prices and have become further impoverished. It is these persons who are then recruited as seasonal farm labour in the developed world. Those who return, however, may have experienced politicisation in their host country, and contribute fresh ideas to the mix of political ideas in their home country.

8.2.6 Sport

Cricket

Cricket has dominated sport in the former British Caribbean, as it has in most of the countries once belonging to the British Empire. Those countries field the major teams today, contesting international test matches and one-day events. While a direct import from Britain in the nineteenth century, the West Indies has embraced the game and made several innovations, transforming it from being a staid 'Englishman's game' into something dominated by flamboyant personalities, complicated Caribbeanised 'strokes', and rituals involving spectators and music.

In the aftermath of slavery, cricket became a means whereby the white planter class could continue to demonstrate moral and racial superiority over their black and coloured subjects. Played first only among whites in elite clubs, the popularity of the game spread as the colonised tried to emulate a sporting tradition where 'gentlemanly' traits were courted more than physical prowess and expertise. Cricket as played by the British was a languid game conducted politely among equals: it did not matter if you lost but it was important that you did so gracefully; the batsman was expected to 'walk' when he was out, even if this was not detected by the umpire; and it was not winning that was important but celebrating British culture and sportsmanship.

The internationalisation of cricket among many member countries of the Commonwealth (Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and India are all major players on the global scene, but Sri Lanka and South Africa play too) has increased its commercial potential. While there are many formal and informal cricketing clubs and matches organised at the village, district and national level in each Caribbean country, the emphasis in cricket culture lies in the ebb and flow of the fortunes of the West Indies cricket team. Professional cricketers are well paid and today play all through the year. Thus, having begun as an instrument to entrench British colonialism, cricket was itself transformed into a Caribbean institution, and today is undergoing still more changes through its internationalisation and commercialisation to the point where profitability becomes the major rationale (Box 8.10).

Major competitions between Caribbean countries include the Caribbean Premier League (CPL), which is a Twenty20 competition (see also Chapter 13). The inaugural competition, in 2013, was won by the Jamaica Tallawahs, who beat the Guyana Amazon Warriors in the final. The IPL (Indian Premier League) includes West Indian players and those of other nationalities who play for the Indian cricket clubs. Chris Gayle, Dwayne Bravo, Sunil Narine, among others, are regular players for this competition.

ACTIVITY 8.8

1. Explain why cricket remains very popular in the Caribbean in spite of being a protracted game steeped in traditions that date back to the nineteenth century.
2. Name FOUR West Indies cricketers who have been knighted.

Soccer (English football)

Soccer has taken the world by storm in recent years. It is perhaps the most popular game today in a global context,

The name **soccer** (short for Association Football) arose to distinguish football played by Football Association rules from the game of rugby football (shortened to 'rugger').

judging by the importance of the World Cup, which rivals the Olympics in status and prestige. Like cricket, the game in its present form originated in England, where the Football Association first compiled the laws that still underpin football rules today. Thus it is another example of a Caribbean sport heavily influenced by non-regional countries.

Unlike cricket, however, Caribbean countries have not as yet been able to pool their respective talents

BOX 8.10

West Indies Cricket today

While cricket was introduced into the Caribbean in the nineteenth century by the British, who dominated the sport for a long time, today the influence of extra-regional countries is again being felt. Cricket today has been transformed from the Victorian ideals that Englishmen once held about the game. It is now a major sport in a number of countries, the salaries and awards are lucrative, various players from one country routinely play in other countries and the frequency with which test matches are carded means that styles become familiar and homogenised. It is hardly possible nowadays to discern a cricketing style distinctive to one country or region. Today all the teams have fast bowlers and spin bowlers and powerful batsmen who learn the best aspects of style and skill from each other.

In the twenty-first century the game of cricket has been influenced by:

- Technologies such as the 'third umpire' – cameras that record the play and provide evidence to make a more informed judgement about whether someone is out, if the umpire is not sure.
- A departure from the ideals of good sportsmanship of yesteryear, with allegations of match fixing, bribery and corruption across the different teams, hostility among players degenerating into racial slurs and name calling, and infighting and indiscipline, as has happened regularly in the West Indies team in their relations with each other and with the West Indies Cricket Board.
- Becoming highly commercialised and a valued commodity of the mass media, especially the sports media, which buy rights of transmission and exclude others.
- Efforts to make the game more profitable and attractive to the consumer and players, with many more one-day internationals, higher prize money incentives drawing the best players and keen competition, a 'season' that is now virtually year round as a cricketer may play in two or three test series for the year as well as at the country level. The Twenty20 version of the game is an example of this.
- The personal endorsement contracts of players, which sometimes conflict with the interests of the team as a whole.

Even though local cricket clubs were stratified according to race and colour, colonial people of all hues sought to transform the game into something more representative of Caribbean society and culture. When the West Indies cricket team

soundly beat England at Lord's cricket ground in 1950 the victory was especially important because the colonised had beaten the coloniser at his own game *in the mother country*. That was one of the strongest teams the West Indies ever fielded, including batsmen Frank Worrell, Everton Weekes and Clyde Walcott (the Three Ws) and two top-class spinners, Alf Valentine and Sonny Ramadhin. From that time onwards teams from around the Commonwealth have repeatedly triumphed over the mother country in cricket supremacy. What was to be a colonising mission, the introduction of cricket to the colonies, turned out to be another medium for the phenomenon of creolisation. For example:

- 'Cutting' was a batting stroke invented in the Caribbean, demanding great skill, flair and style, likened by C.L.R James (1963) to the works of art of Michelangelo, thus deliberately equating Caribbean cricket with great western art forms – a postcolonial stance of resistance to the norms of the coloniser.
- The portrayal of cricketers as gentlemen of moral superiority was resisted by Caribbean people, who introduced opposite values – employing fast bowling in such a way that it terrorised batsmen (Learie Constantine in 1929 against England, and later on Wes Hall), along with ferocious batsmen such as Clive Lloyd.
- Composing calypsos about cricket confirmed the importance of the sport in Caribbean society and culture, particularly among the grassroots (an unintended consequence). The 1950 West Indies victory exploded into a 'jump-up', carnival style, with Lord Beginner composing on the spot the verses 'Cricket, lovely cricket', about 'those two little pals of mine, Ramadhin and Valentine', as Lord Kitchener led joyous West Indian spectators around the grounds and down the road – an event which stunned the English public.

Today an international cricket match played in the Caribbean is the scene of loud music (reggae and soca) in between each 'over' (a set of six balls bowled to the batsman from one end of the pitch; the next 'over' is bowled from the other end), dancing, food, revelry and colourful individuals with their signature horns and conch shells who add to the applause and excitement. No longer do cricketers wear only white; all teams now wear colourful uniforms splashed with the logos of the companies they endorse. Thus, although the game was originally played in the region as a result of non-regional influence, the people of the region do not see cricket today as anything but an important part of their regional experience.

to produce a West Indian football team. Only Haiti (1974) the Reggae Boyz of Jamaica (1997) and the Soca Warriors of Trinidad and Tobago (2006) have been able to make it to the World Cup finals. Collectively we might stand a change of repeating that feat more regularly or have greater successes at that event. The Caribbean Professional Football League, backed by regional businesses with the purpose of introducing professional standards to Caribbean football in the 1990s, unfortunately did not last long, though there have been recent suggestions that it might be revived. But the region does hold active inter-island and international competitions between many local clubs and there is a long tradition of secondary school football.

As with basketball (see below), many an aspiring Caribbean footballer has sought recognition through gaining a sports scholarship to the US, a country relatively new to soccer but with tremendous resources to develop the sport. Alternatively, the most talented players hope that they will be recruited directly by the prestigious and well-paying UK or European football clubs at the heart of the action (Box 8.11).

◆ In the list in Box 8.11 three Caribbean countries only are represented, each with two or three players. Can you account for this?

BOX 8.11

Caribbean players in the Premiership

A number of world-class footballers have come out of the Caribbean in recent years. They have played for top European clubs as well as in the United States and China, for example. In 2009–10, according to BBC Sport (http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/football/eng_prem/8182090.stm), the following Caribbean-born players took part in the UK Premiership, which is perhaps the finest football league in the world (though the Italian and Spanish leagues might disagree!).

- The Arsenal – John Barnes (Jamaica).
- Bolton Wanderers – Ricardo Gardner (Jamaica), Lloyd Samuel (Trinidad).
- Stoke City – Ricardo Fuller (Jamaica).
- Tottenham Hotspur – Pascal Chimbonda (Guadeloupe).
- Wigan Athletic – Jason Scotland (Trinidad).
- Wolverhampton Wanderers (Wolves) – Ronald Zubar (Guadeloupe).

Basketball

Basketball is rising in popularity in the Caribbean, largely owing to the dominance of the American mass media, and it is particularly popular among the region's youth. The phenomenal success and multimillion-dollar contracts that young black men have earned in this sport in the US have captivated the attention of Caribbean youth. The Caribbean heritage of Patrick Ewing, Shaquille O'Neal, Tim Duncan and others has also deepened interest in the game. Unlike cricket, a basketball game lasts for about 40 minutes and so there is no room for boredom; it is fast-paced from beginning to end.

While being popular, basketball is very much a village and community sport, with local inter-club matches. There are regional basketball championships but relatively few high-profile international competitions. Local basketball players may look forward to the Olympics but most Caribbean countries cannot afford to send many teams to compete in different events, so sports fielding ten or more players tend to be sidelined. However, the astounding financial rewards of the game in the US continue to encourage Caribbean youth with the right skills to seek a sports scholarship to the US (see Chapter 13).

Track and field (athletics)

Among the sports at which Caribbean athletes are most successful is track and field, which encompasses running, jumping and throwing events. World-class athletes from the region compete at the highest levels of international competition, including at the Olympics and World Championships (Fig. 8.11).

An impressive array of champions have come from both Anglophone and non-Anglophone Caribbean nations. Table 8.2 shows the Olympic champions produced by the region in London in 2012. As well as individual events such as 100 metres and 200 metres, the region has produced some world-class relay teams who have challenged, and sometimes beaten, American and European



Fig. 8.11 Kirani James, winner of the Olympic 400 metres, 2012

Table 8.2 Olympic gold medallists from the Caribbean in 2012

Name	Event	Country
Usain Bolt	Men's 100 and 200 metres	Jamaica
Kirani James	Men's 400 metres	Grenada
Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce	Women's 100 metres	Jamaica
Felix Sanchez	Men's 400 metre hurdles	Dominican Republic
Keshorn Walcott	Men's javelin	Trinidad and Tobago
Chris Brown, Demetrius Pinder, Michael Mathieu, Ramon Miller	Men's 4x400 metres relay	Bahamas
Yohan Blake, Usain Bolt, Nesta Carter, Michael Frater	Men's 4x100 metres relay	Jamaica

Source: P.B. Jordens, Overview of the Caribbean Region's Medal Performance at the 2012 Olympic Games in London, England. *Curaçao, 2012*. At <http://repeatingislands.files.wordpress.com/2012/08/caribbean-medal-performance-london-2012-by-peter-jordens.pdf>, accessed 3 April 2014.

teams. In the 2012 Olympic Games, for example, Caribbean athletes won 24 medals, including 8 gold. Jamaica was the leading Caribbean nation, winning 12 medals, including a clean sweep of the gold, silver and bronze medals in the 200 metre sprint, a feat previously only achieved by the Americans. They were ranked third overall in the track and field medal table.

Research mini-project

- 1 Draw up a similar table to Table 8.2 to show world champions from the Caribbean region at the last two World Championships. How does their performance compare with that at the 2012 Olympics?
- 2 Find out which of the French track and field medallists at either the Olympics or the World Championships came from the Caribbean. Add their names and départements to your table.

Track and field, like cricket, soccer and basketball, came to the Caribbean via the non-regional colonial and neocolonial powers. Track and field athletics originated with the Ancient Greeks, who first held the Olympic Games in 776 BC, where the events were limited to a race over 190 metres. Other events that developed included boxing, wrestling and equestrianism, which are also included in the modern Olympic Games (Box 13.6), but the track and field events were in many respects different from those we see today.

The modern Olympiad was revived in 1896 by the Frenchman Pierre de Coubertin, and held in Athens out of respect for their ancient progenitor. Track and field has always been at the centre of the modern Olympics. In 1912 the International Association of Athletics Federations

(IAAF) was formed at the end of the Olympiad held in Stockholm that year. World Championships are held biennially (every two years), and often are hosted by major world capitals (e.g. Moscow in 1913, Beijing 2015, London 2017). However, although the sport began in Europe, Caribbean athletes are not much influenced, and certainly not overawed, by the prowess of athletes from outside the region.

Track and field in the Caribbean is overseen by the Central American and Caribbean Athletic Confederation (CACAC). Beginning in 1967, CACAC has held its own international track and field event biennially in the same year as the World Championships, hosted by nations across the Caribbean and Central America. Many Caribbean athletics federations also belong to the NACAC (North American, Central American and Caribbean Athletics Association), which also includes the countries of North America.

ACTIVITY 8.9

1. To what extent do you think Caribbean athletes' success in world track and field championships reflects a postcolonial desire to defeat colonial and neocolonial countries?
2. How much does the departure of Caribbean athletes to study and compete at US universities constitute a type of 'brain drain'?

8.2.7 Religion

The evidence for extra-regional influence on religion is strong, both in the imported world religions of Christianity, Islam and Hinduism and in the prevalence of syncretic religions showing both European and African influences.

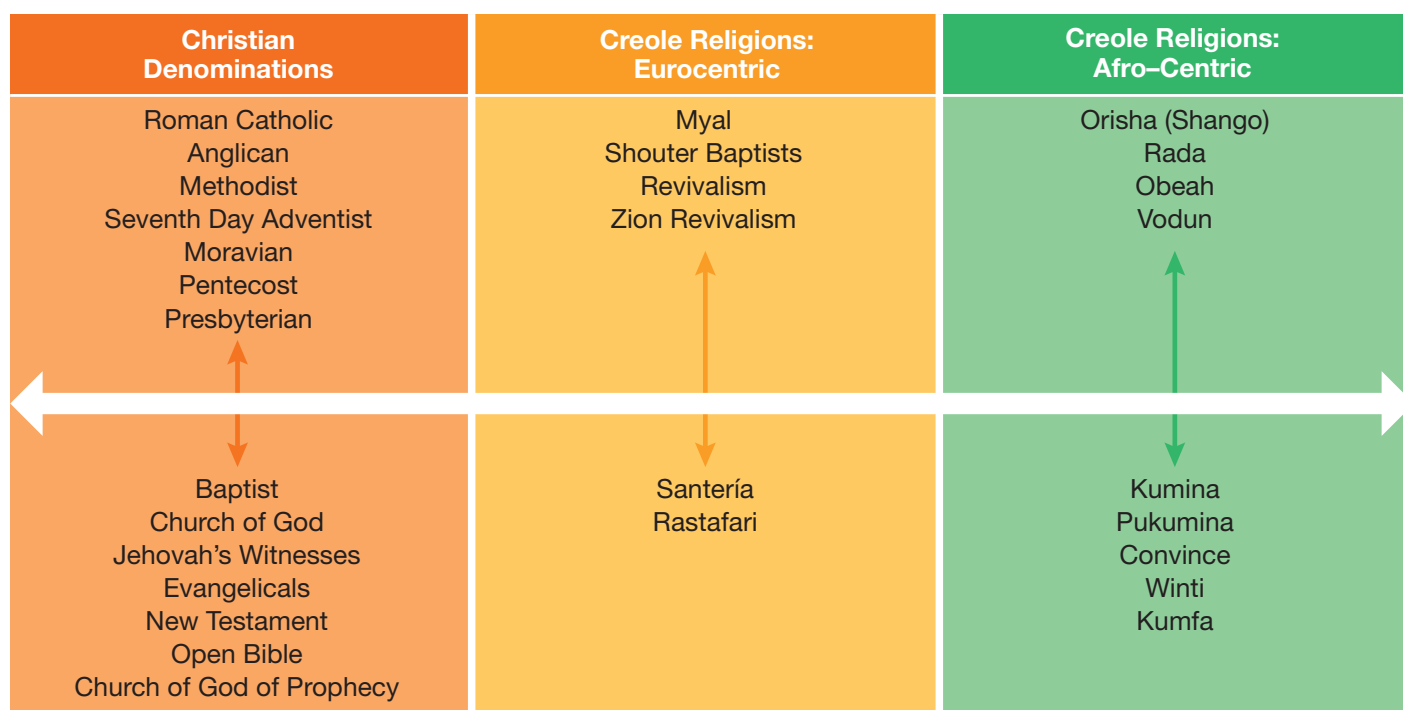


Fig. 8.12 Continuum of syncretic religions in Jamaica

Syncretic religions in the Caribbean

Caribbean syncretic religions came from a merging of European (mainly Christian) and African (mainly animist) elements. These religions may be placed on a continuum, with Eurocentric religions at one end, and

Afrocentric religions at the other, as shown in Fig. 8.12 for Jamaican syncretic religions.

Today, African elements in these religions include drumming, chanting, shouting and dancing; music is integral to worship. The religious ceremony tends to be highly emotional compared to a Sunday service in the established churches. Christian elements are found in the use of the Bible, the feast days of the saints and recognition of the Holy Spirit.

On a much deeper level we see syncretism in the ways that the Christian religions have been adapted to recognise the sacred in all aspects of life. African cosmologists acknowledge the spiritual in all places and activities of everyday life, such as in rivers, dancing, stories, dreams, visions, healing and wholeness. It is a belief system woven into a way of life that is holistic; there are no differences between what is secular and what is sacred. This is not strictly a cultural retention, as the ways in which African cosmology itself underwent change and adaptation in confronting the dominant Christian beliefs resulted in something quite new, a true hybrid.

Religious hybridisation must be understood as a creation where the extent of fusion can vary. Thus, Myal (Box 8.12), Revivalism, the Rastafari, the Shouters and Shakers (Box 8.13) are Caribbean religions that are primarily Christian and syncretised with African elements. However, more Afrocentric Caribbean

BOX 8.12

Myal in Jamaica

Myal is an early Caribbean religion that developed in Jamaica where Christian elements were blended with African world views. When Baptists fleeing the American War of Independence settled in Jamaica, bringing that religion with them, they soon realised that their congregation, as well as the native ministers, not only also belonged to the Myal faith, but were actively incorporating, transferring and transforming Christian doctrine and concepts into a Myal world view. The Holy Spirit was deemed important as an intercessor for the faithful, and from then till now spirit possession has played a key role in all Afrocentric religions in the Caribbean. Later, Revivalism, Pukumina (or Pocomania) and Kumina all flowered in Jamaica. Myal and Revivalism were influential in the development of the Rastafari religion in Jamaica in the 1930s.

religions also occur as hybrids. They are more African in orientation than Christian but still have some elements of Christianity. Examples are the Orisha faith of Trinidad and Tobago (Box 8.14), with variants such as Shango, also found in Grenada and Carriacou, the Santeria of Cuba,

the Winti of Suriname and the Vodun of Haiti (Box 8.15). The fusion of Christianity and African cosmologies finds common ground in that both recognise a spirit world populated by angels, archangels, the forces of good and evil, supernatural powers and other entities.

BOX 8.13**Shouter Baptists in Trinidad and Tobago and St Vincent**

Shouter Baptists (otherwise called 'Spiritual Baptists' or 'Shakers') in Trinidad and Tobago and St Vincent derived from a meeting and mixing of Baptists from the south of the United States who settled in Trinidad in the nineteenth century, and whose beliefs were syncretised with existing traditional African belief systems such as Rada, Shango and Obeah. Migration between Trinidad and St Vincent served to strengthen the faith and increase membership. Both the Shouters in Trinidad and the Shakers in St Vincent were persecuted by the British Government. Officially they were deemed a public nuisance because of their noisy services, shouting, bell-ringing and drumming.



Fig. 8.13 Bell-ringing at a Shouter Baptist ceremony

BOX 8.14**Orisha in Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada and St Vincent**

In Trinidad and Tobago Orisha is frequently confused with the Spiritual Baptist movement. The two groups share beliefs and practices from a number of traditions. One of the main differences is that Spiritual Baptists see themselves as Christians and focus on their version of the Christian Trinity, and believe Christ gives them power over the Orisha. By contrast Orisha rituals focus on African deities such as Shango (Desmangles, Glazier & Murphy, 2003, p 293). There is also the widespread assumption that the Orisha and Shango are two separate religions, where in fact Shango is a god in the Orisha faith and the religion of Orisha in Trinidad was previously known as Shango. It is only very recently (the past 20 years or so) that the name Orisha has become widely recognised.

Orisha venerates the spirit of the overarching god, Oldumare, that dwells in the deities when they become manifest. The religion is therefore considered monotheistic. Orishas are the spirits of ancestors or other powers who directly intercede in the lives of people, acting as guardian spirits and as intermediaries for Oldumare. They have

certain specific areas of functioning, for example – Ogun (clearer of paths), Eshu (messenger, fertility), Obatala (making the Earth liveable for humans) and *Shango* (power of lightning and thunder). There are many others.

The Orisha religion can be traced to the Yoruba peoples of West Africa, particularly Nigeria. In the Caribbean it developed even before Emancipation in the mixing and merging of African belief systems in the Spanish colony of Trinidad, to which there was a large influx of French planters and enslaved Africans in the late eighteenth century. African religious beliefs – mainly Yoruba mixed with those brought by the enslaved from Martinique, Guadeloupe, St Vincent and Grenada (who would not have been all Yoruba) – merged with the influences of Roman Catholicism. It is interesting to note that the creole religions of Revival, Rastafari and Kumina do not have this Roman Catholic element. In Orisha, the many saints of Roman Catholicism merged easily with African ancestral spirits and deities. For example, Ogun is identified with St Michael and Shango with St John.

BOX 8.15

Vodun in Haiti

Vodun (or Vodou) is comprised of Roman Catholic elements interwoven with the religious traditions of the Fon people of Dahomey, the Yoruba and the Ewe. While Vodou is the official religion today of Benin (the former Dahomey) in West Africa and the dominant religion in Togo and parts of Ghana, it does not have Roman Catholic elements in Africa. However, in Haiti, while many persons profess to be Roman Catholics, they also practice Vodou, a natural part of their upbringing and their life. Roman Catholicism and Vodou form a seamless, syncretic religious entity for most Haitians, which makes it a religion both totally syncretic and dependent on extra-regional influences, and also unique to the Caribbean.

Historically, Vodou practitioners were marginalised and persecuted, especially by the Roman Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic elites of the government; and internationally, the religion suffers from a 'bad press'. Images of spirit possession and animal sacrifice have been sensationalised in books and movies, as if they do not exist in other Caribbean religions. Vodun is similar to Orisha in that there are many saints, African deities and ancestral spirits who represent the overarching god, known as Bondyé (Good God) by the Haitians. Therefore Vodun is monotheistic but, as in the other syncretic Caribbean religions, the supreme god is distant and well disposed towards humanity so that there is no need to appease him. Rather, the saints, African deities and spirits, called *loas* (or *lwa*), are powerful because they provide the link between humans and the divine.

The main idea in Vodun is that of service to the loa. During possession, the devotee may undergo terror, pain and convulsions, but all that is to be borne because the loa brings knowledge and solace to the people and in the spirit of community the devotee does his or her duty. There are hundreds of loas. African origin loas are Legba, Ogun, Erzilie and Obatala, while Catholic saints include St John, the Virgin Mary (*Mater Dolorosa*), and St Peter (*Papa Pie*). The syncretism is so intense that the

distinctions between the Catholic saints and the African divinities are blurred, as in Orisha.

The altar in a Vodun ceremony contains Roman Catholic elements, such as votive candles, holy water, crucifixes and pictures of saints, intermingled with flowers, food, stones and flags. Formal prayers are modelled on pleas or supplications to Mary, Mother of God and other deities. While the main Vodun ceremony calls on the loas to become present, there are other rituals which invoke the power of the dead (ancestral spirits) and attempt to appease or triumph over other spirits regarded as evil. Vodun practitioners tend also to be Roman Catholics and regard the priest as a conduit between them and Bondyé, but the loas are a means whereby each believer can have direct experience of the world of the spirits.

Vodun is first and foremost a dance accompanied by drumming where the dancers move in a circle in a counter-clockwise direction. The drums are of different sizes and are made according to African traditions using stretched goat skin over the drumhead. The drums are sacred because drumming is the medium which summons the loa and she or he comes to inhabit both the drum and the drummer in the ceremony. The drumming and dancing are accompanied by singing, and repetitive call-and-response refrains. Fig. 8.14 shows a Vodun ceremony.

There are two major branches in the development of Vodou – the Dahomean tradition known as *Rada* and that of the *Petro Nation*. Rada is aligned towards protection, benevolence and guidance but Petro Nation is more aggressive, even violent, and is thought to have propelled the slaves towards their bid for freedom in 1791. It developed in remote parts of the French colony where Maroons formed small, fugitive communities and even incorporated Taino influences into their worship, so it has different syncretic elements. Within Petro Nation the gods of Vodun (Rada) take on menacing characteristics as they fight oppression and are bitter about the brutal history of enslavement of the Haitian people.

ACTIVITY 8.10

Practitioners of Vodun say that it suffers from its 'Hollywood image'.

1. Explain what this may mean. Suggest reasons why Vodun has been stereotyped by non-practitioners.
2. Discover some more about the main tenets of Vodun by researching its beliefs and practices.
3. Suggest reasons why the white planter class, the authorities and other groups in the society of Caribbean countries wanted Vodun and some other syncretic religions outlawed.



Research mini-project

Investigate the existence of syncretic religious forms in your country. In order to develop some in-depth understandings of at least one of these religions, you may need to speak to a practitioner of this religion, or your teacher may arrange for that person to come and speak to your class group. Identify elements that belong to the original or 'parent' religions and elements that seem to be completely new.

Fig. 8.14 A Vodun ceremony

Many of these syncretic religions share similar beliefs, rituals and practices. Differences can sometimes be attributed to their historical evolution under varying colonial conditions. For example, Santeria survives in Cuba with a host of saints renamed in Yoruba because the Spanish colonisers felt that it was only a local and harmless expression of Roman Catholicism. Thus, the god Shango is associated with St Barbara, Our Lady of Mercy becomes Obatala and Oshun, the goddess of rivers, is worshipped as the Virgin of Cobre. The Yoruba and Roman Catholic names are used interchangeably.

In the Afrocentric Caribbean religions there is a greater emphasis on trances, spirit possession, being a medium for the spirits, animal sacrifice and magic of various kinds, as well as occult practices, than in those where Christianity is more dominant. The magic that is practised is called *sympathetic magic* – a connection is made between physical objects and one's life: for example, reading cards, the palms of the hands, the stars or something you throw that falls into a pattern. There is a magical connection between the physical world and one's past, present and future lives.

The 'openness' of these religions can be seen when practitioners say that they are Roman Catholics or belong to established Christian churches and attend mass or traditional services. There is no division as they see it – the devotee can often see a different time and place for orthodox Christian worship and the folk or the

syncretic religion. Thus, bereaved family members make the journey home from the Netherlands to Suriname to attend Winti burial rites, which in many instances occur in addition to burial services in the traditional churches. And it is said that in Santeria the devotee sees the Orisha in the Christian saint. It is this blending, coexistence and integration that constitute creole culture.



SUMMARY

The influence of extra-regional countries on many aspects of society and culture in the Caribbean is still strong. However, this influence is marked or is undergoing change in different ways. For example, Caribbean people have adapted the cultural forms of the coloniser (plays, foods, the symphony orchestra, sports) into distinctive hybrid products of their own. Political systems such as the Westminster system of government have undergone change and today previously excluded groups are calling for constitutional reform and experiments in power-sharing. The long-established farm worker programmes involving temporary stays of Caribbean migrants in the metropole are now being seen as a form of economic exploitation. As an important tourist destination, the Caribbean is inevitably subject to strong extra-regional influences, but even here there have been some moves to challenge this state of affairs.



Wrap Up

The Caribbean has been embroiled in a relationship with western countries since the fifteenth century, during most of which time it has played a subaltern role. All aspects of society and culture under colonialism and afterwards have been influenced in significant ways. In the aftermath of independence, Caribbean people have tried to resist this influence – novelists have written about it, scholars and ordinary people have investigated it, performances have been created using our indigenous cultural art forms, and our entrepreneurs have looked for creative ways to develop alternative products, be it tourism, culinary arts, music or sports. Postcolonial thinking has provided a way of examining this influence and our varied responses to it – resistance, conformity and creative strategies. The insights provided by postcolonial thought should help us to continue to examine these matters as the forces of globalisation bring the ex-coloniser and the ex-colonised together again in a neocolonial association, to which the Caribbean participants now contribute important elements.

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Research TOPICS

A major research issue for Caribbean countries is the psychological implications of our colonial and neocolonial condition. One way of examining this issue is to try to find out how people make decisions about what goods and services to buy, especially when there is a choice between a 'First World' product and a local product. You could focus on either music or cuisine.

Methodology: One convenient way of collecting data for this study is to gather three or four persons whom you think are articulate and reflective enough to take your project seriously. You will need to record the interview and ask the participants to resist the tendency to speak while others are speaking.

Supposing you are investigating the choices people make with regard to music, questions to the group may include what type of music they like and what they are likely to buy.

- You may ask them to comment on what each other is saying so that you collect different views.
- You can directly introduce controversial themes, such as the claim that they may have a colonial mindset

if there are strong preferences for music from extra-regional countries. The arguments they put forward are important for you to capture. An interesting point for you to reflect on is whether we can dub something as 'colonial' just because it comes from the UK or the US – perhaps it is the music of the diaspora (e.g. blacks in the US) which has the appeal for us and not mainstream music from those countries?

- You must also try to probe beneath answers such as 'because I like the music' to ascertain as far as you can what people mean when they say they like a particular form of music. The individual, too, may not be able to give exact reasons but this may be an interesting phenomenon for you to dwell on, i.e. the extent to which people are aware of why they like something or why they dislike something else. Remember the study is about people's thinking about the choices they make.

Finally, having collected the data, you can analyse the recorded interview. You should comment on the main themes that you detect and where possible use insights from postcolonial theory about how people accommodate to the influences from extra-regional countries – do they demonstrate conformity, resistance or creative strategies?

Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Identify TWO examples where you believe colonialism has influenced consumption practices in Caribbean society and culture. (2 marks)
- (b) For EACH example you have chosen, explain in detail how this influence manifests itself. (4 marks)
- 2 (a) Define (i) postcolonialism; (ii) neocolonialism. (2 marks)
- (b) Describe TWO influences of neocolonialism on political events in the Caribbean. (4 marks)
- 3 (a) Identify TWO ways in which European colonial powers developed colonial economies for their own benefit. (2 marks)
- (b) Give TWO reasons why Caribbean countries found it difficult to establish manufacturing industries when they became independent. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) Explain how the Rastafari and reggae have become connected in the popular mind. (2 marks)
- (b) Suggest TWO reasons why reggae music has enjoyed such large-scale acceptance in extra-regional countries. (4 marks)
- 5 (a) Name TWO Caribbean dramatists, directors or producers. (2 marks)
- (b) Describe TWO ways in which extra-regional countries have influenced Caribbean theatre arts. (4 marks)
- 6 (a) Outline TWO criticisms of the Westminster system of government in the Caribbean. (4 marks)
- (b) Describe ONE constitutional reform in Caribbean countries that may address criticisms of the Westminster system. (2 marks)

- 7 (a) State TWO reasons why Caribbean migrants choose to do seasonal work in First World farming. (4 marks)
- (b) Explain ONE way in which Caribbean migrant farm labour contributes to the economy of extra-regional countries. (2 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Explain why the countries of the Caribbean, even though politically independent, are still seen as dependent on extra-regional countries.
- 2 Using examples, explain how Caribbean cultural expressions have been influenced by extra-regional countries.
- 3 Describe how cricket has been used by Caribbean people as a force of nationalism and development.

Challenge essay questions

(30 marks)

- 1 Using Caribbean society and culture as an example, explain what is meant by a 'postcolonial society'.
- 2 Analyse the nature of the tendency among Caribbean people to prefer foreign goods and services.
- 3 Using ONE named Caribbean country as a case study, show how the religious life of its people has been influenced by that of extra-regional countries.
- 4 'It is largely self-interest that motivates the US to provide assistance to Caribbean countries.' Discuss.

MODULE

2

Issues In Caribbean Development

The first module, on Caribbean society and culture, provided the context and background essential for a study of Caribbean development, the subject of this second module. This module introduces you to different conceptions of development and how they have changed over time, the factors that promote and hinder development, and how Caribbean people and institutions have shaped the region's development. It is important to realise that the colonial past and the neocolonial present that you have studied in Module 1 influence almost every aspect of the process of development – the traditional imbalance of trade flows with developed countries, the foreign tastes and preferences for consumer goods, the penetration of the region by the foreign mass media, a western-oriented education system, the overdeveloped port and capital city and underdeveloped rural hinterlands, and the stratified nature of society and culture. These conditions form the backdrop against which Caribbean countries have been grappling with development efforts from the decolonisation era to now.

MODULE OBJECTIVES



On completing this module you will be able to demonstrate an understanding of:

1. 'development' as a contested concept;
2. factors that promote or hinder development;
3. the dynamic interaction of politics, economics, culture, society, technology and the environment in the development process;
4. the role of regional integration in development;
5. the efforts of Caribbean people and institutions in promoting development.

9

Concepts and Indicators of Development



Cite Soleil, one of many slums and shanty towns in Port-au-Prince, Haiti

‘Development’ refers to both a process and a desired end state. This chapter explores the different conceptions of development that have had historical significance in the Caribbean. At least three different conceptualisations of development are discussed. These ideas show that there are various ways in which development can be measured, leading to the use of different indicators.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. analyse different conceptions of development;
2. show the interrelatedness in different approaches to development – economic development, sustainable development and human development;
3. examine different indicators of development.

9.1

Concepts of development

In the independence period, three major aspects of development have become important in our region: (a) sustainable development; (b) economic development; and (c) human development. We shall look at these later in the chapter. However, first we need to think about the concept of development itself.

9.1.1 Values, Complexity and Freedom

Three main ideas have contributed to the concept of development, long before countries determinedly began to focus on development in the aftermath of the Second World War. It is important to separate out these ideas because they overlap in the models of development that we will study later and it is insightful to see which ideas are emphasised in the different models. It also helps to make sense of the ever-present discussions and arguments that take place around the concept of development.

Development as the enactment of human values

According to this conceptualisation, for anything to develop or become better improvement has to be related to some values that are being enacted. For example, what would it take for you to develop as an individual? Certainly, placing a value on the acquisition of knowledge and skills might well be one aspect of this, and perhaps attention to your interrelationships with your fellow human beings, making sure that the contact is humane and enabling for both of you. In addition, most people would place a high value on material possessions and the comforts of life. Hence, when improvement is being contemplated for anything, including societies, some set of values is going to be emphasised, depending on what model or approach to development has been chosen. For

instance, an approach to development based on a model of **economic growth** emphasises values that have to do

Economic growth is a measure of the amount the economy (in terms of GDP or GNP) has grown compared with the previous year or quarter-year.

with increasing the standard of living – the material wealth of people.

Development as increasing differentiation or complexity

This conceptualisation of development states that for anything to develop it must become more complex and more differentiated – its component parts will interrelate with better and deeper linkages. It will therefore become more efficient and more integrated. A very good understanding about this comes from how societies are described – as developing and developed. A developing country is probably an agrarian society or has a high percentage of its labour force in agriculture. The industrial and manufacturing sector may be small and located only at the port city. A developed country, on the other hand, is one where much of the labour force is engaged in industry, manufacturing, business, commercial activities and other services. These activities generate much larger profits than agriculture. Agriculture, though, is much more efficient than in the developing country because of mechanisation, needing only a small labour force. Agriculture has been ‘developed’ by increasing the use of machines, which need large tracts of land to operate efficiently. That leads to the closure of small farms and their amalgamation into huge concerns operating just like factories. Thus the transition from ‘developing’ to ‘developed’ reflects an increasing differentiation and complexity within the society and the various sectors of the economy.

Development as liberation or human freedom

This conceptualisation of development has come from philosophers, educators, humanitarians and even economists and political scientists. It states that for people to be developed, whether individually or as a group, development must be accompanied by growth in their autonomy, in the options they can pursue, and in their sense of self-efficacy – that their actions are significant and can make a difference.

Many people see development as liberty or human freedom being achieved through education. This is one of the reasons why education is so much a part of a country's developmental plans. An educated person has a range of knowledge and skills that he or she can call on to better understand the world, to reflect on why people act the way they do and to critically appraise the best options and decisions that can be made to live a better life. The more education one has the more likely it is that one will be free of the encumbrances of life, namely poverty, a narrow outlook and minimal aspirations. That is why many parents scrimp and save so that their children can have the opportunity to go on to secondary and post-secondary education. Even people who have had only some education intuitively know of its potential to empower and liberate.

Education, then, is just one approach that might be taken in a development model to achieve a basic conceptualisation of development – one concerned with liberation and human freedom. This idea of development tends to be prominent in the development discourse in the Caribbean and other postcolonial societies because those societies were forged under conditions of oppression and inequality. However, education seems to be central to all the models discussed above, though for different reasons.

These three persistent ideas or conceptualisations of development discussed above provide us with tools to examine the different models and approaches to development that have been tried in the Caribbean. They help to reduce the confusion in understanding development discourse as these ideas continually overlap in quite different development models or approaches to development. Thus, development as the enactment of human values is sometimes expressed in terms of an increase in the standard of living, in other words *economic development*. The second concept, of development as increasing differentiation or complexity, expresses itself in the institutions of the country, which may involve political development but might also cover cultural or social development. Development as liberation or human freedom is an idea that is now receiving much more attention under the name *human development*.

9.1.2 Terms and Definitions

We are familiar with many everyday terms that in some way imply the development status of a country and implicitly or explicitly the particular emphasis deemed important. For example, look at Table 9.1.

Table 9.1 Development terms

Terms usually associated with ex-colonies	Terms usually associated with Europe, North America, Australia and the strong economies of Asia
Developing	Developed
Third World	First World
South	West, North
Agrarian societies	Industrialised societies
Less Developed Countries (LDCs)	More Developed Countries (MDCs)
Economically Less Developed Countries (ELDCs)	Economically More Developed Countries (EMDCs)

The list in Table 9.1 suggests several ideas about development:

- Countries like the Caribbean which are 'developing' are expected to attain the conditions and ways of life of the 'developed' countries – a 'stage' or evolutionary model of development.
- The ranking of 'first' and 'third' worlds indicates the inferior status of developing countries.
- A term such as 'the south' indicates a growing understanding that more neutral terms should be used, even though there is a problem of fit when Australia is grouped as being part of 'the north'.
- 'Agrarian society' indicates a type of economy that cannot sustain development as experienced by 'industrialised societies'.
- LDCs and MDCs are being replaced by EMDCs and ELDCs to show that development is a multifaceted process, and even if a country's economy may not be as strong as another's, the whole society and culture cannot be categorised as 'less developed'.

The use of different terms and changes in the terms over time indicate that certain approaches to development that were once dominant are today being contested. However, all the terms are presently in use, indicating much confusion about what development really entails. One very durable conviction about development is that it involves economic development.

ACTIVITY 9.1

1. Conduct independent research to find out what NICs are. What other terms are sometimes used to distinguish between 'developing' and 'developed' countries?
2. Give examples of countries that may be difficult to classify as either developed or developing. Explain why they are difficult to classify.

9.1.3 Economic Development

Most of the terms in Table 9.1 emphasise a notion of development based on the economy. The specific goal of development in the decolonisation era was economic development through economic growth. It was expected that the problems of poverty, inadequate schooling, technological backwardness and rural neglect would be automatically addressed once Caribbean countries were experiencing improvements in economic growth. It was believed that since more goods and services were being produced, more people would enjoy material benefits through increased income and the standard of living would rise.

Traditionally, emphasis has been put on measures that focused on increasing output and increasing the per capita share of that output through expanding production and limiting population growth. These ideas formed the basis of economic policies in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s in the Caribbean. They tended to be based on ethnocentric approaches to development that portrayed it in a uniform way, modelled on the development experience of western societies. There was a preoccupation in western thought at that time about what was seen as the steady progress of humankind, and this evolutionary perspective influenced approaches to development.

However, much of the development efforts expended in those decades did not significantly address the problems being faced by citizens. Thus, while production has increased in Caribbean countries, the ordinary citizen has not benefited meaningfully from such growth – the resources produced (goods, services, amenities) have not 'trickled down' to the mass of the population as expected. Today there is more of a willingness to acknowledge that economic development is multifaceted and that economic growth is only one aspect of it. Economic development as understood today emphasises the welfare of people in a country and is very much concerned with poverty reduction.

- Identify TWO ways in which conceptions of development in the Caribbean were derived from the ethnocentric ideas of developed countries.

9.1.4 Sustainable Development

Sustainable development has the potential to deliver

Sustainable development is economic development that will continue to benefit later generations, rather than using short-term exploitation for short-term gains.

economic growth and prosperity today without compromising the needs of the next and subsequent generations. One of the chief planks of this is serious consideration being given to environmental protection, and particularly to environmentally sound agricultural and forestry practices and energy generation. We shall look at the link between sustainable development and human development in the next section.

- **Agricultural practices.** Before Contact with Europeans occurred, the indigenous population followed centuries-old practices which protected the environment by the use of **fallowing**. However,

Fallowing involves letting the land rest for several years between periods of cultivation.

practices that included clearing the land of trees resulted in the deforestation we see today in much of the Caribbean, as with the Mayan system of *milpa*. The traditional *milpa* practice allowed the land to rest and restore its nutrient content, but when population pressure cut the time allowed for land to lie fallow, deforestation resulted. Slash and burn agriculture also encourages **soil erosion**, especially when carried out

Soil erosion describes various types of land degradation, especially the washing away and blowing away of topsoil where plant and tree cover has been removed.

on steep slopes. The later monoculture of sugar plantations destroyed soil fertility, and modern commercial practices compound the problem (Box 9.1). The result is that farmers today struggle to grow crops successfully. Haiti is a particularly good example of this problem, which impacts not only on the environment but also on its human inhabitants (Box 9.2).

- **Deforestation and reforestation.** In the larger Caribbean territories much of the forest cover has been cleared for agriculture and urban development. Only in the relatively mountainous islands, such as Dominica, where steep slopes prevent agriculture,

BOX 9.1**Commercial agriculture and land degradation**

- Continual cultivation causes *soil exhaustion*, where the nutrients in the soil become severely depleted. This in turn results in lower crop yields.
- Mechanisation causes *soil compaction* – tamping down the soil so that infiltration is reduced and roots disturbed.
- The removal of natural plants and tree cover leaves soil vulnerable to extreme weather conditions, leading to the formation of gullies, loss of top soil, silting up of rivers and flooding.
- Artificial fertilisers give the soil a quick burst of nutrients, but do not repair the texture and structure. The soil becomes more acidic when fertilisers are used improperly.
- Pesticides reduce the levels of useful insects such as bees. Herbicides remove species biodiversity.

road construction and human settlements, has the land remained in forest. Maintaining an extensive forest cover is an important environmental goal because forests play a vital role in regulating river flow. Because of the delay caused by trees using the water further upstream, there is no spike in river levels

in a river basin following a heavy rainfall event. It also takes a long drought period before the river level drops. If the forests are removed, however, rivers can disappear, or be subject to sudden changes in flow. In some Caribbean countries efforts are being made to reforest areas where soil degradation is a problem. Box 9.2 gives a case study of a reforestation project involving both Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

- **Energy generation.** Economic development requires reliable sources of power for industrial machinery, computers and modern life in general. Sustainable development means that we must cease to rely on fossil fuels and find alternative sources of energy which can be sustained over the long term. The most useful of these for the Caribbean is solar energy, as we have high levels of sunshine most of the year. Solar energy can be exploited in two ways. *Solar thermal* technology is the older of the two and has been available in the region for more than twenty years. This involves heating tubes filled with glycol, which in turn heat hot water directly. *Solar photovoltaic energy*, or PV (Fig. 9.1), works by converting solar energy into electricity. This can be used immediately, or stored in batteries for later use. Other non-fossil fuel energies include *wind and wave energy*, which can be used to generate electricity by turning turbines, and *nuclear power*, which relies on the nuclear reaction from specially enriched forms of uranium and plutonium. Nuclear power is, however, problematic in that if safety procedures fail it can be highly dangerous to the local population, and its waste products are also difficult to dispose of, since radioactive waste continues to be dangerous for millennia.



Fig. 9.1 Photovoltaic panels

BOX 9.2**Case study: Reforestation in Haiti and the Dominican Republic**

Today forest cover in Haiti is barely 2 per cent of the land area, one of the lowest in the world (compare this with Suriname where it is over 60 per cent). An advanced plantation economy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries under the French, when large tracts of forests were cut down for monoculture, set deforestation in motion. In the ensuing era of rebellions, revolutions and dictatorships that typified much of Haiti's later history, the poor raided the forests for cooking fuel and this continues to this day, though supplies are severely depleted. The landscape over much of Haiti is therefore bleak, characterised by bare expanses of rocks separated by gullies and dried-up watercourses (Fig. 9.2). Vast areas of topsoil have been removed, agriculture is sparse and poor yields common, and water is scarce. The human cost of deforestation is that it has quickened the cycle of poverty experienced by the Haitian peasants who, as in other Caribbean countries, are dependent on the natural resource base (farming, fishing, forestry) to support their basic needs.

The so-called 'Green Border' project in Haiti and the Dominican Republic is seeking to address this problem with an ambitious series of reforestation

initiatives. The first phase had a budget of US\$2.5 million, funded by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the governments and local authorities of the two countries involved.

The project has four components:

- planting of new forests on degraded lands;
- encouraging the local people to manage natural resources carefully, including raising awareness on the benefits of biodiversity;
- the promotion of sustainable alternative livelihoods to prevent further soil degradation as a result of poor agricultural practices;
- the establishment of a technical cooperation programme.

By 2013, still in its first phase, the project had restored more than 514 hectares of degraded forest and created almost 10 000 'person-days' of employment. It had also established a cross-border information database between the two countries that share the island of Hispaniola.

Source: <http://larc.iisd.org/news/undp-reports-on-reforestation-achievements-in-haiti/>, accessed 15 April 2014.



Fig. 9.2 Deforestation in Haiti

9.1.5 Human Development

Development thinkers sought to show that there was a preoccupation with economic development construed narrowly in terms of economic growth. Economic development is much more than this; it is concerned with human welfare, but the economic growth idea tended to dominate thinking. This led to a search for a new way of describing development, resulting in the 1990s in the Human Development Paradigm (Box 9.3). This brought together ideas about economic development and sustainable development to show that they referred to the same thing and that a more holistic portrayal of development was obtained by putting human beings at the centre of the process – human development. All three may have different emphases but there cannot be one without the other: for example, for economic development to be sustainable it has to pay attention to human development, and planning for human development must necessarily rely on a sustainable programme of economic development.

Modernisation theory

McClelland (1961) suggested that the ‘achieving society’ was one where citizens held values that promoted achievement and were open to economic and technological advancement. Inkeles and Smith (1974) devised a modernity scale to test whether members of a society held modern values. They felt that once modern institutions such as factories and schools were established, a modern set of values would become commonplace. For example, both schools and wage labour would help to develop values associated with punctuality, regularity, regard for extrinsic rewards such as certificates and wages, understanding the chain of command, the profit motive, individual effort and achievement, openness to change, mixing with diverse groups, technology, production and industry and a desire for acquiring status symbols.

These theorists were thinking of what it would take for a largely agrarian society to begin the process of development. Critics point to the extreme ethnocentrism of this view, which bases what must be considered

BOX 9.3 The human development paradigm

The human development paradigm (HDP) has certain basic views:

- that people are the means and ends of development; people are thus central to the development process and we know when development has occurred by looking at the quality of their lives;
- that development is largely about broadening people’s choices; they have more options and opportunities to develop themselves along the lines that will bring them the greatest sense of well-being as well as income;
- that poverty and income inequality are the major problems of human societies that prevent a better quality of life.

Given the above, the HDP envisages development as a process whereby a country works on eradicating the barriers to four key areas of development: equity, productivity, empowerment and sustainability (Box 9.4). These are called the ‘pillars of the HDP’ and build on each other, equity being the most important as it begins the process. These ideas originated in the United Nations and related organisations and, unlike the modernisation

and human capital approaches, are not considered to be ethnocentric. This is because the HDP is concerned with general areas of human well-being. How a country decides to pursue the ‘broadening of human choices’, for example, will differ considerably from one country to another.

It may well be that one country sees universal primary education (UPE) and universal secondary education (USE) as the main route towards this goal. Other countries, perhaps with greater resources, could increase access to tertiary education by ensuring that the state pays part of the tuition fees. In another country, investing in distance education may be more appropriate. On another front, increasing the minimum wage, opening up Crown lands for leasing, or providing additional work-related training for youth may be what some people need to develop themselves. Hence, the HDP does not stipulate or prescribe how the development process should be undertaken. Each country sets its own developmental goals by addressing the four key areas in ways that it deems appropriate while adhering to an understanding of development as an increasingly better quality of life for citizens.

‘development’ on the experience of western countries. It also assumes that traditional values are incompatible with development. However, there are many scholars and others in the Caribbean who endorse this view and are firmly wedded to a western model of development. For example, in the Caribbean our earliest thrust into national development planning advocated ‘industrialisation by invitation’ – inviting foreign assembly-type factories to come and set up plants in exchange for tax holidays.

Human capital theories

This involved indices that were more easily measured than modern values. Human capital theorists saw the people of a country as its most important resource in the development thrust. For the country to develop, the people had to be upgraded and improved – in short, treated as human capital. In enunciating the theory, Schultz (1961) began a movement that swept through the newly independent nations of the world. Education was

BOX 9.4

The pillars of the human development paradigm

Equity

‘Equity’ refers to a commitment on the part of the government and people of a country to enable all social groups to access the opportunities that the country offers and to be fair to all groups as they grasp these opportunities. Thus the poor, those who live in rural or isolated areas, women, the handicapped, those of different religious or political views and other ethnic groups should all be equally able to access opportunities. What this means can be far-ranging in terms of putting the necessary planning in place. For example:

- where schools are sited is a major consideration and a school mapping exercise should be undertaken to ensure that as many as possible benefit from the building of new schools;
- poverty may be a reason why some cannot access educational opportunity, so subsidised transport, books and school meals may become a priority.

Other than education, the distribution of land may be a barrier to equity. A small percentage of the population may own a large percentage of the land. Land redistribution schemes are vitally necessary in some countries but entail a deep commitment to the cause of development as ensuring a better quality of life for all, because what is necessary to accomplish this may disrupt the status quo. Land may be taken from some and they will need to be compensated. Land may be given to others but with the understanding that they will pay over time. Other than education and land reform, there are many areas of social life where equity can be addressed.

Productivity

Productivity refers to more than an economic understanding of growth. It is based first of all on equity: if people have equal access to educational and job opportunities then it is quite likely that their productivity will be high. This is based on

the notion that if one takes advantage of what opportunities there are and becomes qualified, so that one can access jobs based on qualification, then there is a certain level of commitment to that job. This pillar is trying to address the problem of people being in a host of ‘dead-end’ jobs where they are bored, or see no opportunity for advancement, or where the job involves routine tasks that do not challenge them. Productivity, then, is more than the quantitative output measured in GNP per capita or GDP. Productivity in the HDP is based on how much people like their jobs and are happy in them, and the following factors influence this:

- job security;
- opportunities for staff development and professional advancement;
- structures that allow workers a voice in how the work is managed and organised;
- a reduction in the stress related to the job;
- the extent to which working in a particular place affords certain kinds of benefits (e.g. financial institutions giving workers softer loans, companies giving workers discounts on merchandise, government departments running advanced training courses tied to promotion).

Empowerment

‘Empowerment’ refers to the degree to which individuals feel a sense of self-efficacy – the knowledge that they are capable of doing things to improve their lives. Again it is based on equity, allowing persons to become productive citizens in whatever area they choose. If individuals have benefited from the equalisation of educational and economic opportunities and are developing themselves in their work, the chances are they will have a high regard for themselves (self-esteem). This enables them to make decisions that are in their best interests and perhaps broaden their range of interests.

seen to be the most important investment that would pay off in national development. If education was to be offered to as many citizens as possible, so the theory goes, then they would possess a high level of knowledge and skills that would ensure high labour productivity. They relied on indicators such as percentage of the national budget invested in primary, secondary and tertiary education, literacy levels, educational performance, school enrolment and labour productivity (measured mainly by GDP per capita). Again, this theory had elements of the modernisation thesis in it, including the emphasis on a western education system that would produce citizens with the necessary knowledge and skills for a labour force mainly involved in industrial production. It was only after many schools had been built, leading to an increase in the number of educated unemployed, that development planners, economists and others sought to reconceptualise development in more holistic terms. These new concepts of development did not place undue emphasis on economic growth, and particularly did not single out education as the only engine of development.

ACTIVITY 9.2

Analyse the HDP as an approach to development and show how the three conceptions of development described earlier are evident in the HDP.

Sustainability and human development

Sustainable development is often spoken about as if it were primarily an environmental issue. But for any degree of sustainable development to take place there must be commitment on the part of the people of the country, and that depends on the extent to which their human development needs (equity, productivity and empowerment) are being addressed (see Box 9.4). Again we come back to the scenario where the various approaches to development – economic, human and sustainable development – are similar but discussed in ways that lead people to think that they may be quite different things.

For example, if equity is severely compromised, so is the environment. In societies where there is inequality in the distribution of income, where many live in abject poverty, daily survival will be more of a priority than the well-being of future generations. We see this in Haiti, where the forests have been cut down for firewood, leading to massive soil erosion. Hence most of the measures designed to ensure sustainable development are directed at poverty reduction and reducing inequalities (which are also areas of concern in economic and human development).



SUMMARY

How development is conceptualised shapes the approaches that a country adopts to improve the quality of life for its citizens. While improvement was thought to result from economic growth and progress, that emphasis is now believed to lead to environmental deterioration and increasingly wider income disparities between the rich and the poor. The importance given to economic growth approaches to development stemmed from our belief in the ethnocentric theories that conceptualised development as a uniform process that could happen in the Caribbean just as it did in western societies. These approaches minimised the problems faced by citizens in newly independent countries. Economic development as understood today emphasises the welfare of people in a country and is very much concerned with poverty reduction. Approaches to development that emphasise human development or sustainable development are really only different aspects of an approach to economic development that values a holistic portrayal of development. All three ideas about development are interrelated and focus on the welfare and well-being of people.

9.2

Development indicators

In order to measure different aspects of development, a number of indicators were invented. These indicators are numerical measures designed to be compared across different countries to determine 'development'. In practice they usually succeed only in measuring economic growth.

9.2.1

Economic Growth Indicators

Some specific indicators of economic development are described below.

- **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** is the total market value of the output (goods and services) of a country in a given year. GDP per capita, the GDP divided by the population, is also used for comparison purposes.
- **Gross National Product (GNP)** is the value of output (goods and services) produced by a country plus any income derived from abroad. GNP *per capita* (a Latin term that means 'for each person') is obtained by dividing the GNP by the population. This shows

BOX 9.5

Criticisms of economic growth indicators

An indicator is a quantitative assessment of how countries are ranked on some variable or category such as population growth or savings per capita. It is used for making comparisons across countries and regions. However, it is important for a country to know where it stands in relation to variables which measure aspects of its development. In order to plan effectively the country must get a good sense of its performance to date, and this is where well-conceived indicators can be invaluable.

Although economic growth indicators are widely used to measure a country's development, they should be approached with caution, particularly when only one indicator is used. This often happens with GNP per capita, which is in common use by international bodies to categorise the income levels of countries and forms the basis of judgements about whether countries are rich, poor, developing or developed. GNP measures economic growth but not all aspects of economic development. In addition, to use it to infer something of the development status of a country shows a limited understanding of the concept of development. For example:

- GNP per capita only captures the production statistics that go through official accounting procedures. It cannot report on the activities of the informal economy. This includes subsistence farming and barter activity, the black market

and drug trade as well as domestic work and small businesses where people are paid in cash-only transactions.

- GNP per capita is recorded in US dollars, but in different countries one dollar is able to buy more than in another. Thus, for purposes of comparison, the raw GNP per capita statistics should be converted to another statistic, the purchasing power parity (PPP), which sheds more light on the development status of a particular country and the effects of inflation, shortages and dislocation of the economy.
- GNP per capita for a country does not show how that income or wealth is distributed. The increased income may be concentrated in the hands of a few. Another indicator, the Gini coefficient (\$9.2.3), is used to show income inequality more specifically.
- GNP per capita does not take into account how natural resources are being depleted in the drive to increase output and raise productivity. Many countries which record increased economic growth have done so at the expense of the environment. Another statistical procedure known as natural resource accounting is used today to measure these costs to the environment.

the average income of citizens in a country and is used to classify countries as high, middle and low income. While it is a good indicator of the economic strengths and weaknesses of countries, it cannot be said to indicate economic development (Box 9.5).

- **Population growth rate** is calculated by measuring birth and death rates, as well as migration statistics, and is a key indicator of economic growth. Usually it means that if a country can keep its total population growth down, then its per capita income should rise.
- **Age dependency ratio** is the ratio of dependants – people younger than 15 and older than 65 – to the working-age population (those aged 15–64). This measure suggests that if there were more economically active persons than dependants then they would be better able to take care of their dependants. Hence, governments would not have to spend so much on social services and would be able to spend that money on infrastructure and development works.

9.2.2 The Human Development Index (HDI)

The HDI has been developed by the UNDP. It uses a combination of socioeconomic measures to give an indication of human welfare. Sustainable development (and economic development) is only possible where human welfare is being addressed positively. These measures are:

- **Longevity** (measured by life expectancy at birth). This gives an indication of the health resources of the country, access to those resources, levels of poverty in the society (which may impact on nutrition and pre- and post-natal care), whether people have access to safe drinking water, as well as whether wars and civil strife are an ongoing problem. It may also indicate the levels of education that mothers have had because there is a general correlation between the health of a family and the education level obtained by the mother.

- **Knowledge** (measured by access to education, adult literacy and mean years of schooling attained). This indicates the extent to which members of a society are able to embrace opportunities related to further and continuing education, such as ICTs, in order to improve the quality of their lives. Subsidising education (as well as health) raises productivity levels. In some societies girls are restricted in their attempts to access further educational opportunities and this is seen as working against their welfare, preventing them from attaining their full potential.
- **GDP per capita** (an economic measure adjusted for PPP that reflects the difference in the cost of living between countries). This underscores the point that economic growth and economic development are major components of any development programme.

Increasingly the HDI is being adopted by international authorities as a better way of assessing development than using only economic growth indicators, as in the past. The HDI formed the basis of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted by the UN in 2002 as guiding principles for countries to establish:

- Goal 1 – eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- Goal 2 – achieve universal primary education;
- Goal 3 – promote gender equality and empower women;
- Goal 4 – reduce child mortality;
- Goal 5 – improve maternal health;
- Goal 6 – combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- Goal 7 – ensure environmental sustainability;
- Goal 8 – develop a global partnership for development.

These goals suggest that the approaches to development should combine the basic ideas of economic, human and sustainable development.

9.2.3 Gini Coefficient

The *Gini coefficient* is the most widely used indicator today to measure inequality. Calculated on the basis of income (GDP), it is an important tool in comparing levels of inequality between countries and within a country. It reflects the proportion of persons in a society who have the resources to live a comfortable life, and those who do not, by measuring the gap between the richest and poorest citizens. On the Gini scale, 0 indicates perfect equality and 100 perfect inequality. If the gap is small then it is safe to say that that country has a low level of inequality. If the gap is large then that signifies that

there are very wealthy persons and others who live in abject poverty. Gini values are sometimes expressed as percentages. Table 9.2 shows some Gini coefficients for the Caribbean.

◆ **Why do you think some of these Gini coefficients are more up to date than others? Do some research to try to find updates for any of these countries.**

Table 9.2 **Gini coefficients for selected Caribbean countries**

Country	Year	Gini coefficient
Anguilla	2007	39
Barbados	2010	47
Belize	2014	53
British Virgin Islands	2002	23
Costa Rica	2009	50
Dominica	2002	35
Dominican Republic	2010	47
Grenada	1999	45
Guyana	1998	46
Haiti	2001	59
Jamaica	2004	45
Nevis	2000	37
St Kitts	2000	40
St Lucia	1995	50
St Vincent and the Grenadines	2007	40
Trinidad and Tobago	2005	39

Sources: World Bank indicators (various years); UNDP data (various years); CIA Factbook at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2172rank.html>, accessed 15 April 2014.

The primary importance of indicators such as the Gini coefficient is to give a good idea of the levels of poverty and inequality in a country, as national development – whether economic, human or sustainable development – is more difficult to attain when poverty and inequality are entrenched and widespread.

9.2.4 Internet Penetration

The Caribbean region compares reasonably well with other regions with regard to **Internet penetration**. For

Internet penetration measures the degree to which a country or region is participating in the information superhighway we call the Internet, or the World Wide Web.

example, statistics for 2012 show that overall Internet penetration in the Caribbean stood at around 32.4 per cent, compared with 32.6 per cent in Central America and a world average of 34.3 per cent (www.internetworldstats.com). However, if compared with North America (78.6 per cent), the Caribbean lags behind. Table 9.3 gives some penetration data for individual Caribbean countries, with the United States included for comparison.

Internet penetration is important because countries where businesses can access international markets via **e-commerce** and use the Internet to source their

E-commerce describes trade linking buyers and sellers via the Internet. Websites allowing purchases to be made, links from one website or webpage to another, and email communication are all important elements of this.

suppliers of raw materials have more opportunity to tap into the globalised economy.

ACTIVITY 9.3

1. Study Table 9.3 carefully.
 - a. Can you see any relationship between the data here and that in Table 9.2 for countries that appear in both tables?
 - b. Redraw Table 9.3 dividing Anglophone Caribbean countries from non-Anglophone ones. Can you see any differences between them?
2. Draw a bar chart showing the information on percentage Internet penetration in the Caribbean (i.e. not including the US).
3. Explain how Internet penetration can be used as a development indicator.

9.2.5 Modern Technology

Modern technology may act as an indicator of development in that Internet penetration (§9.2.4) and Internet use, together with social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, constitute an inclusive and democratic way of putting large numbers of persons in contact with each other, able to access news and sports

as they are happening. Individual blogs, vlogs and other Internet-based information outlets let people know about happenings in their own country and elsewhere, and thus allow them a 'voice'. Internet penetration across even rural areas means that there are very few isolated communities except those who are marginalised by the digital divide, such as the elderly.

ICTs allow not only ordinary citizens but businesses, government organisations and financial institutions to process information quickly so that economic development is enhanced by e-technologies. Previously, when a good deal of the paperwork was done by hand, there were long delays, bureaucratic red tape and wait times in, for example, processes related to trade and commerce. Actual indicators of the penetration of modern technology include measures of the number of computers per capita, Internet use per capita, number of cell phones worldwide, business websites based in each country, and so on.

Research mini-project

Surf the Internet for tables and other data relating to the penetration of modern technology across the countries of CARICOM. Analyse your findings in terms of the relationship of ICTs to development.

9.2.6 Good Governance

The way in which we are governed has a direct impact on the way our country develops. Because of this, indicators have been developed to show the level of good governance in a country. For example, the World Bank has launched the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) for the years 1996 to 2012, covering the following areas:

- whether the voice of ordinary people is heard by government;
- accountability of government bodies to the whole body of citizens or its representatives;
- political stability and absence of violence;
- government effectiveness;
- regulatory quality;
- rule of law;
- control of corruption.

These indicators represent a research dataset summary of the views on the quality of governance provided by a large number of survey respondents in both industrialised and 'developing' countries. The indicator rankings are produced by a group of organisations: Revenue

Table 9.3 Internet penetration in selected Caribbean countries

Caribbean country	Population (2012 est.)	Internet usage, 30 June 2012	% population (penetration)
Anguilla	15 423	6 940	45.0
Antigua and Barbuda	90 313	74 057	82.0
Bahamas	362 765	235 797	65.0
Barbados	278 550	199 915	71.8
Belize	327 719	74 700	22.8
Bermuda	69 080	61 025	88.3
Cayman Islands	52 560	37 112	70.6
Cuba	11 075 244	2 572 779	23.2
Curaçao	145 834	92 500	63.4
Dominica	73 126	37 520	51.3
Dominican Republic	10 190 453	4 643 393	45.6
French Guiana	249 540	67 220	26.9
Grenada	109 011	37 860	34.7
Guadeloupe	450 244	169 920	37.7
Guyana	782 105	250 274	32.0
Haiti	9 801 664	836 435	8.5
Jamaica	2 889 187	1 581 100	54.7
Martinique	410 694	170 000	41.4
Montserrat	6 200	1 389	22.4
Puerto Rico	3 690 923	1 771 643	48.0
St Kitts and Nevis	50 726	22 480	44.3
St Lucia	162 178	142 900	88.1
St Vincent and the Grenadines	103 537	76 000	73.4
Suriname	560 157	179 250	32.0
Trinidad and Tobago	1 226 383	650 611	53.1
Turks and Caicos	46 335	14 760	31.9
United States	313 847 465	245 203 319	78.1
TOTAL ALL AMERICAS	941 968 792	528 701 158	56.1

Source: www.internetworldstats.com, accessed 14 April 2014.

NOTES: 1) The Internet and population statistics for the 3 Americas were updated for June 30, 2012. (2) The demographic (population) numbers are based mainly on data contained in Census Bureau. (3) The most recent Internet usage information comes mainly from the data published by Nielsen Online, ITU, and other reliable sources. Source: www.internetworldstats.com. Copyright © 2012, Miniwatts Marketing Group. All rights reserved.

Watch and the Brookings Institution; the World Bank Development and Research Group; and the World Bank Institute. The respondents are mainly corporate bodies such as think tanks, NGOs and private sector firms. (The World Bank emphasises that it does not use the WGI to allocate resources to different countries.)

Indicators such as this are *subjective*. That is, they depend on the views and opinions of groups and organisations rather than objective measures such as economic growth or the number of children enrolled in school. They are also dependent on the mindset and worldview of the organisations that produce them, which are overwhelmingly western.

◆ **To what extent does the lack of objectivity in these indicators present a problem with using them?**

9.2.7 Sustainability and Responsible Environmentalism

The human development paradigm (Box 9.3) combines the three concepts of development by prioritising the needs and input of human beings. In other words, the goal of the HDP is to attain sustainable development by following a process of development that puts people first – a philosophy of human development. According to the HDP, development initiatives cannot be sustained unless they are built solidly on concerns of equity, productivity and empowerment. If those three are put in place, then sustainability becomes a matter of course. The HDP therefore not only endorses sustainable development, it outlines a process by which it can be attained.

Where big business interests operating on a quantitative understanding of output as productivity destroy the forest resources and are responsible for overfishing and for polluting the environment, sustainable development is threatened. The costs of a controlled afforestation programme, of using only nets of a certain size and of disposing of waste safely all cut into profits. Such activities also jeopardise the livelihoods (and productivity) of poorer folk who depend on the resources of the forests, sea and land. To make such companies observe safer environmental measures, both the state and the citizenry must be empowered enough to challenge big business. Thus measures designed to ensure sustainable development may well be directed at empowering village groups, communities and grassroots organisations to raise issues pertaining to the operations of big business interests.

However, responsible environmental measures are often not emphasised because this would shift the balance too much away from the needs of the local people, particularly those who are poor and who depend on the natural resources, however threatened, for their survival. We can see this among the problems of Haiti, where the land is overused because there is no alternative. The work of grassroots organisations who advocate on behalf of the poor is important in these situations.

Sustainable development, then, depends on a host of conditions in the society that enable citizens to understand the importance of engaging in practices that do not harm the environment. It goes against the unbridled economic growth of the past and the understanding of ‘development’ as ‘human progress’. It also takes the view that an increase in the standard of living is a consumption-oriented indicator that encourages overuse of a country’s resources. Sustainable development goes against the idea of those who promote economic growth as ‘development’. It is more concerned with the quality of life of citizens, not just a material improvement in their existence. All these concerns are also concerns of economic development (Fig. 9.3 and Box 9.6 opposite). Box 9.6 discusses some environmental indicators of development.



SUMMARY

It has to be said that development indicators (see Fig. 9.3) are a bit of a mixed blessing. Some, such as GDP and GNP, only measure economic growth, which does not guarantee long-term prosperity or sustainable development. Others measure items such as child poverty and malnutrition, literacy rates and school enrolment, or access to medical care or the Internet. These are related to human development, but still give quite a good indication of the level of economic development, since greater economic prosperity tends to allow better services and opportunities for the population. The Gini coefficient, however, reminds us that there is often a poverty gap even within nations, and a relatively prosperous country may still contain pockets or even large areas where there is real poverty.

BOX 9.6**Environmental indicators of development**

The development debate began with attention being given to economic indicators such as GDP and GNP per capita. Today the HDI uses economic indicators as only one aspect in assessing the human development of a country. It also places emphasis on education and longevity, which may be thought of as socioeconomic indicators (as they are), but the trend now in discussing environmental indicators is to be holistic. For instance, we have to think about what contributes to environmental health. Certainly, indicators that tell us about the income levels of a region and its population distribution will contribute to an understanding of resource use and the carrying capacity of the land. If, for example, the carrying capacity of the land is exceeded by whatever economic activity is being pursued, certain features of environmental degradation may result, measured by indicators of soil erosion, land quality and pollution. Thus,

to reach more informed judgements about sustainability and environmental health, social and economic indicators need to be added to environmental indicators.

One of the most recent environmental indicators to be devised by the World Bank is called the 'wealth measure'. However, it is very different from an economic measure. It is a 'stock measure' in that it estimates the total wealth of the country (assets, human capital and natural capital) as a starting point. It works together with another indicator, 'genuine savings' (called a 'flow measure'), which adjusts the wealth balance sheet by estimating how much the country has added to its stock of resources (including production and investments in education) and/or lost wealth through pollution, land degradation, human sickness and increases in poverty. The final tally is an indicator of the sustainability of the development process.

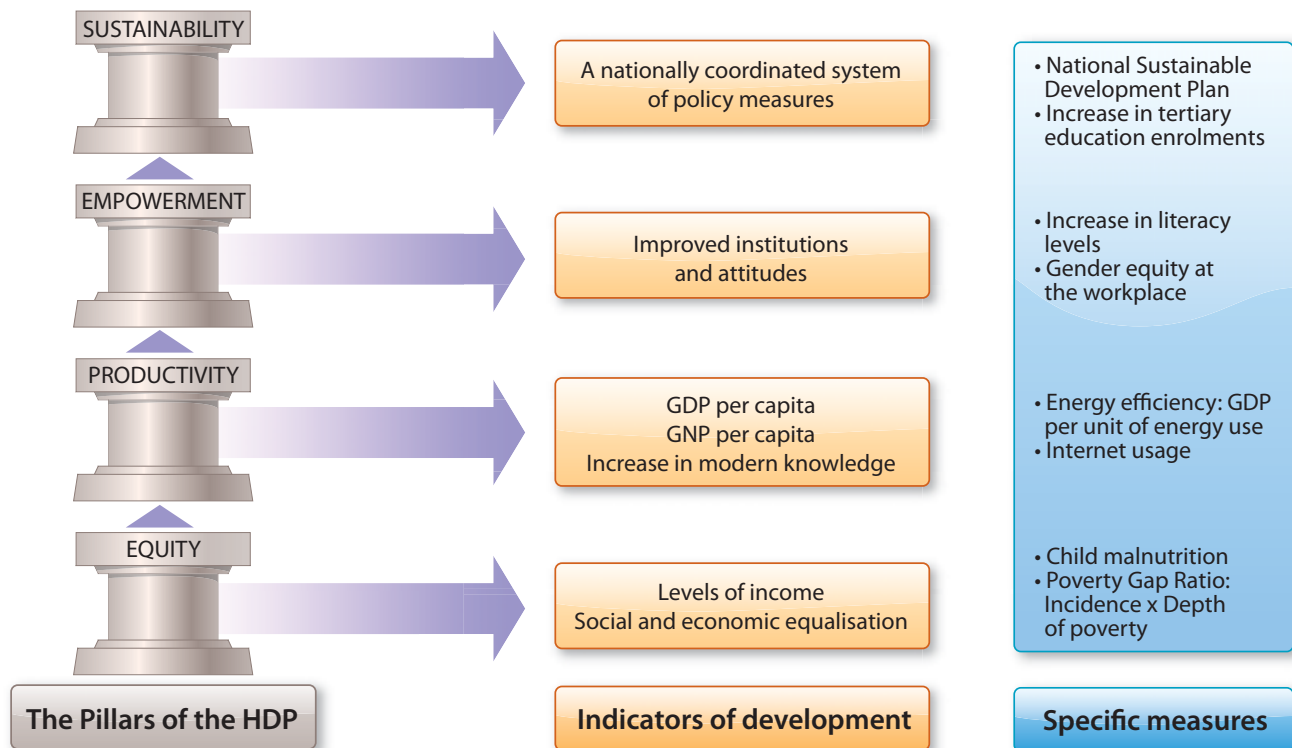


Fig. 9.3 Human development indicators



Wrap Up

Development is a multifaceted phenomenon. This chapter has analysed different conceptions of development – economic growth, economic development, human development and sustainable development. Apart from economic growth, all the others depend on processes that enhance the welfare of human beings and see improvements in equity, productivity and empowerment as gains leading to sustainable forms of development. The indicators of development have undergone a change over time so that today the human development indices are more prominent than those indicating only economic growth.

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Research TOPICS

An investigation based on the analysis of published statistics or indicators can throw light on development processes in the Caribbean. This study will be based on secondary data and it might be useful if you could compare data from two countries. Choose from among these examples, or construct your own inquiry into development processes that interest you.

- A study of land tenure and farming practices in Haiti, and another country for comparison. You will need data on size of farm holdings, labour productivity, percentage of the population engaged in farming, percentage of GNP from agriculture, and human development indices such as child mortality rates, literacy, access to clean water, etc. Studying the indices should give you evidence to make judgements about development in both countries. You should also point out the inadequacies of the indicators where possible.

- A study of tourist arrivals in two countries, including distinctions between cruise-ship tourism and stay-over tourism, which impact local economic development differently. Track these arrivals over time to see what the trends are.
- A study of trade within the CARICOM area, using import and export data for two countries, together with the details of their main trading partners. You could focus on particular products, particularly where a country's economy is or has been a monoculture, or has depended heavily on two or three products.
- A study of the progress made by two countries towards the hunger reduction goals set out by the United Nations as part of the World Food Summit and the Millennium Hunger Declaration. Focus on food security through greater domestic production, better food distribution and indicators for malnutrition and absolute poverty.

Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Explain what is meant by 'economic development'. (2 marks)
(b) Describe TWO ways in which economic development is related to sustainable development. (4 marks)
- 2 (a) Identify TWO indicators of economic development. (2 marks)
(b) Explain the importance of the TWO indicators you have identified. (4 marks)
- 3 (a) Define an agrarian society. (2 marks)
(b) Suggest TWO reasons why an agrarian society is not considered to be a 'developed' society. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) Give ONE reason why childhood malnutrition is seen as a good indicator of poverty. (2 marks)
(b) Explain why poverty reduction is a major development goal. (4 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Describe what is meant by sustainable development.
- 2 Explain why economic growth does not necessarily reflect development.
- 3 What indicators can be used to assess the extent to which development is conscious of human development goals?

Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 Assess how differing definitions of the Caribbean experience can impact on development issues.
- 2 Evaluate the extent to which approaches to development in the Caribbean still focus largely on economic growth.
- 3 Discuss the pros and cons of foreign direct investment in the Caribbean.
- 4 'Caribbean governments are more concerned with maintaining their political power than creating the conditions necessary to increase human development.' Discuss this statement.

10

Factors which Promote or Hinder Development



Cars in a flooded street in Havana, Cuba

National development became an all-important goal in the aftermath of the Second World War, when Europe had to be rebuilt and its overseas colonies began to seek independence. We have thus had several decades where different models of development have been tried in the Caribbean. This chapter assesses the various factors that promote or hinder development, in order to evaluate how well these models have served us. Various factors that influence development are analysed using understanding about economic growth, economic development, sustainable development and the four pillars of the human development paradigm – equity, productivity, empowerment and sustainability. In addition, indicators of development are highlighted.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. describe the factors that promote and hinder development;
2. evaluate how development has been influenced by political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and technological factors;
3. assess the impact of government policies on development in the region.

10.1 Gender inequality

10.1.1 Patriarchy

In the Caribbean, as elsewhere, society has long been characterised by **patriarchy**. European countries were

Patriarchy describes a social system where men are always dominant and women are treated as second-class citizens.

run on patriarchal lines throughout their long history, as far back as the ancient Greek and Roman civilisations and continuing through the medieval era into modern times. They brought this mindset to the New World when they came here, and organised political and social relations in the light of it. Patriarchy also existed in Africa, so enslaved Africans arrived with the same mindset. In the Caribbean patriarchy operated alongside the racist relations of colonial society, so that black enslaved African women were doubly disadvantaged. When Emancipation and finally political self-rule arrived, black people had learned all too well to think in a patriarchal fashion.

Even today, patriarchy influences Caribbean social relations to an extraordinary degree, as the following examples show:

- In the justice system women still have to comply with laws based on patriarchy, and most judges are men. Women accusing men of rape are quite often dismissed as fantasising or accused of complicity in the rape because of their clothing or sexual past.
- Male dominance in relationships often leads to families becoming sites of oppression and coercion for females, both spouses and daughters.
- Domestic work and child/elder care are examples of real work or labour but their value is often ignored

because it is unpaid and ‘expected’ of women, whether or not they have paid employment as well.

- Girls’ education tends to be geared to the female stereotype of domestic and caring or nurturing skills, while that of boys is focused on science subjects, practical construction skills and high-level intellectual activities such as debating.
- Gendered education leads to lower-achieving females taking jobs in catering, textile manufacture or crafts, nursing, the lowlier service jobs and teaching. On the other hand, higher-achieving females tend to act as if there is a ‘glass ceiling’ in business above which they cannot rise, meaning there is little female participation in high-level boardroom jobs. More professional opportunities are taken up by males in the fields of medicine, law and politics.
- Statistically, poverty affects more women than men, largely because most single-parent families are headed by the mother (or the grandmother if the mother is, for example, working overseas).

While these scenarios may be stereotypical, and change is in the air, the bias towards patriarchy is still evident. Let us look at some of these examples more closely.

Patriarchy in the family

In a family context the term describes a set of relationships where men (grandfathers, fathers, brothers and sons) have more power and authority than women (grandmothers, mothers, sisters and daughters) in the home as well as in the society. In the family, men are the decision-makers, disciplinarians and breadwinners. They are obligated to provide for their families, who in turn respect and obey them. Women take care of children and domestic matters – there is a *sexual division of labour* that is supposed to be complementary and efficient. If they work outside the home, their job and its income is secondary to that of the male breadwinner.

Different groups in the Caribbean follow more or less patriarchal family patterns. The East Indian family system, for example, is highly patriarchal with males and older persons wielding considerable influence on family decision-making in matters such as settling disputes, courtship, marriage, the buying of property, family business and education. The father is indisputably the head of the household and the authority figure. Women tend to be occupied with domestic matters and may work in family-held agricultural plots or in family-run businesses.

How the family's income is spent, who is the main decision-maker and how decisions are made are areas of family life which bring out clearly the gender relations in a family. Many families pool some of their resources to take care of family expenses while each partner has an independent account for personal use. The interesting thing here is that where daily expenses mount up and surpass the original budgeted amount, the money to pay for a new pair of gym shoes, books or music lessons comes, for the most part, out of the mother's account. In many families the man has financial control of the family's affairs. He pays the rent or mortgage and insurance premiums, and has the major say in buying expensive items such as furniture, a car or a domestic

appliance. The woman is more concerned with budgeting and *money management* – making the allotted sum for the month cover all the expenses of the family (utilities, food, clothing, daily travel, health and miscellaneous items).

Even where there is a female-headed household, a man who has a visiting relationship with that family will tend to expect a dominant role within it. Research seems to show that if he is present on a regular basis, whether he is bringing in income or not, the man still plays the role of disciplinarian and has a say in decision-making. Some women make a deliberate choice to have closer relationships with their children and avoid the conflict inherent in having a live-in partner, so that they can make their own choices with regard to expenditure. This has implications for the relative prosperity of that family, since single-headed households are more likely to be affected by poverty than those with two adults providing for the family.

10.1.2 Gendered Education

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was mostly boys who were sent to school, particularly secondary school. However, as the twentieth century went on more girls began to access both primary

Table 10.1 CSEC Candidate performance in selected subjects by sex and grades awarded (I – IV) May/June 2011 (percentages)

Subject	Sex	Numbers writing the exam	Grade I	Grade II	Grade III	Grade IV
English A	M	37 288	14.00	19.85	25.66	25.72
	F	54 118	21.12	23.46	27.59	20.63
Biology	M	5 656	15.77	24.3	32.18	18.3
	F	9 625	16.57	24.27	32.71	17.4
Chemistry	M	5 348	12.72	17.54	34.65	24.12
	F	8 241	11.29	17.39	34.52	25.83
Caribbean History	M	3 678	6.14	26.43	40.27	19.71
	F	7 067	10.47	28.68	36.59	17.70
Mathematics	M	35 368	7.4	10.28	18.67	18.78
	F	54 609	6.61	9.33	18.44	20.41
Physics	M	6 354	19.59	22.22	29.86	20.59
	F	5 537	21.93	25.48	28.97	18.58
Social Studies	M	17 735	3.61	21.81	40.52	23.59
	F	29 222	6.18	26.64	39.41	20.27
Principles of Business	M	11 988	10.24	31.58	34.77	16.24
	F	21 605	12.52	31.24	34.08	15.23

Source: Compiled from CXC (2011), pp 73–76

education and secondary education. Furthermore, in the Caribbean there is today a marked trend of girls outperforming boys at all levels of the education system and in most subjects (see Table 10.1). The gendering of education is thus not about the numbers of boys or girls attending school – as it is in many developing countries, particularly in Africa and Asia – but about what they learn while they are there.

Gender stereotypes

We should, however, beware of speaking about boys and girls as if they each were a single uniform category, because in fact they are not. There are girls who are chronic underachievers and boys who are successful students. Just because, overall in the system, the highest achievers tend to be girls does not mean that the majority of girls who underachieve should be ignored.

Gender stereotypes are traditional attitudes and orientations that classify certain subjects and pastimes as ‘masculine’ and others as ‘feminine’ (Box 10.1). For example, if a school tries to improve sports in a school

but emphasises participation in cricket, that may mean only boys will benefit – at least if the girls have exercised stereotypical choices about sports rather than seeing women’s cricket as an exciting sport in itself (there are Test matches and World Cup competitions in women’s cricket). When governments allocate funds and resources to schools, they are expected to be shared equally among males and females, without any kind of distinction, but unfortunately this type of policy may actually reinforce gender stereotypes. Simply providing more resources does not effectively address the many ways that gender equity breaks down at the level of the school.

Traditional gender stereotypes influence the behaviours of male and female students and this is evident in the life of schools. Table 10.1 not only shows differences in registration and achievement patterns by subject according to sex, but also reflects the ideas and beliefs that guide girls and boys to choose certain subjects and avoid others. This is a *gender issue* because it speaks to a *relationship* playing out between boys and girls.

One of the surprising elements is that the success of girls in the school system has to be set against the prevailing gender ideology of patriarchy in the society which nevertheless limits their successes and participation in high-status jobs and in politics. If we think of some of the major areas of social interaction – the home, schools, workplaces and the church – it is the school that emerges as the site where girls experience the least discrimination. But there are a number of well-documented studies that show teachers, even if they do not realise it, treating boys and girls differently. This treatment may be a mix of negative and positive responses, but together they reinforce gender stereotypes.

BOX 10.1

Masculinities and femininities

Stereotypical masculine behaviours have been constructed by society and include being aggressive, noisy, taking part in contact sports and enjoying the outdoors, as well as having a flair for technology and gadgets. Stereotypical feminine behaviours are largely seen as opposites to masculine traits. For example, girls are expected to be quiet, submissive, to like reading, board games and non-contact sports and to enjoy more passive classroom activities. It is better, however, to see masculinity and femininity as a continuum of behaviours rather than placing them in rigid categories. In different contexts, also, boys and girls may alter their *gender identity* – for example, boys may become more aggressive if girls are around, or display less aggressive behaviours if boys they feel threatened by are present. Having a male or female teacher changes the dynamics for male and female students, who may act differently in different classes. Attributing achievement simply to someone’s sex fails to take into account all the other factors that contribute to a student’s motivation and readiness for study.

The underperformance of boys

Gender socialisation at the level of the school seems to encourage boys to devalue school and classroom norms and this may be part of the reason why many, especially those with learning problems, think that school is mainly a place for girls.

Box 10.2 explores the male marginalisation thesis, and criticisms that have been made of it, as explanations for male underperformance in schools. All of these approaches to understanding the ‘boy problem’ are attempts to realise gender equity at school. Whatever the causes of the problem, the issue remains that boys do not do as well as girls, generally speaking. Some educators feel that if the curriculum and teaching methodologies are upgraded and made relevant to real life, if assessment becomes more authentic and less examination-bound, if out-of-school learning experiences can be arranged, then

BOX 10.2

The male marginalisation thesis

The *male marginalisation thesis* was first given a Caribbean context by Errol Miller (1986, 1991), and it has been controversial from the start. Miller claims that, because teacher training colleges for men were closed down in the nineteenth century, Jamaican males of lower socioeconomic status had few chances or opportunities to access careers in teaching which would have enabled them to gain social mobility – in contrast to girls, who were able to become teachers and move upward socially. As a result, families tended to invest in the education of girls and boys took up manual labour at an early age.

Miller studied the *hegemonic* or *dominant masculinities* of the white and brown men of the upper social strata. They persistently excluded poor black males from opportunities in schooling and the labour market. The male marginalisation thesis uses patriarchy to explain the adversarial relationships between men of different ethnicities which had repercussions in the few opportunities afforded to poor black boys.

One criticism of the marginalisation thesis is that it suggests that females succeeded only because they were given opportunities denied to boys (Barriteau, 2003). A wider variety of factors might include parenting practices and primary socialisation, the way that students' masculinities develop, based on patriarchy, and the feminisation of the teaching profession.

both boys *and* girls will benefit. Girls probably do better in schools because they are socialised to tolerate restrictive environments, but their compliance does not necessarily mean that they are enjoying the education experience.

It has been suggested that a return to single-sex schooling would improve boys' achievement. In 2010 the Trinidad and Tobago government approved a plan to convert 20 secondary schools over time to single-sex institutions and to study the impact on male achievement. However, this approach can be criticised on the lines that it is unhelpful to suggest that the problem is an issue of boys versus girls. Best practices in education can improve education achievement for both boys and girls.

Subject and career choices

With the expansion of subjects at both the CSEC and CAPE levels, students have begun to transcend some of these stereotypes and for many subjects a gender bias is not evident. Subject choices affect subsequent careers and are therefore of lifelong importance. However, there continue to be instances where both boys and girls still tend to choose according to traditional gender stereotypes about what is considered masculine and feminine, even when labour market stereotypes are changing. Generally speaking, boys choose industrial arts and sciences while girls choose the humanities and social sciences. Here we see the beginning of the differentiation that exists in the world of work where men and women gravitate to different occupations and careers, and hence towards different life chances. The issue of traditional gendered subject choice may be keeping girls back in opting for careers in engineering, architecture and other related fields.

Research mini-project

Carry out a mini-survey of girls and boys in your class. Use a questionnaire or interview them individually (this could be done as groupwork with each member of the group interviewing a few students). Find out which subjects they prefer and what career choices they believe are open to them. Present your findings using graphs and tables, and write a report on the issue for the school authorities.

Textbooks

Gender socialisation is an ongoing process in society. Textbooks continue to reinforce gender stereotypes explicitly as well as implicitly. It is possible that authors and publishers, now more conscious of the implications of such stereotyping, are attempting to challenge gender norms. The research project 2 at the end of the chapter addresses this question.

10.1.3 A Gendered Workforce

In the wider society, men hold the important and prestigious jobs and there are barriers, visible and invisible, which prevent women from taking up such positions. A *gendered division of labour* has developed based on the strong belief that a woman's place is in the home. This *gender ideology* complicates the lives of working-class women who carry a 'double burden' of outside work (out of financial necessity) and domestic work (only lately referred to as *unpaid work*).

Income inequality and patriarchy work together to intensify the effects of marginalisation on women by encouraging labour market segregation by gender. This has both social and economic effects. Gender inequality is shown in economic terms when we see that women earn less than men, even if highly qualified, and they are more vulnerable because the majority of poor women have jobs which lack security (in other words, they are easily dismissed). In addition, such jobs may be outside the formal economy and involve working in unsafe and unhealthy conditions.

Historically the male was cast as breadwinner and the female as homemaker who takes care of the children and domestic chores. This is largely a myth, though it perhaps was typical of traditional middle-class families where the husband's job was substantial enough to take care of all the family's needs. Men were more likely to be the family breadwinner at this point, not least because the job opportunities for educated persons were male-oriented (doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, civil servants, retailers, managers) and boys' schooling was privileged over girls'. This became a vicious circle in which girls were believed not to need as much education because they were destined to be wives, mothers and domestic drudges, and without education this was what they continued to be. Even in Amerindian families, boys and girls were socialised differently along strongly gendered lines. The boys learned from their fathers techniques of hunting, fishing, building and knowledge related to the natural world which was useful for such male pursuits, while the girls learned domestic skills from their mothers.

Today the same 'double burden' is borne not only by poor women who are forced to work through financial need, but also by middle-class career women whose male partners do not feel that they have any obligation to share the domestic burdens. However, poor women in particular are placed in an untenable position. They are unable to pay for childminding services so that, if they work outside the home, they will have to leave their young children in a relative's or friend's care. Quite apart from the question of the child's level of safety and comfort, such ad hoc arrangements are unreliable and mothers may find themselves absent from work too often, jeopardising their daily paid salary and sometimes their jobs. Women in the lower social classes who have young children often opt for jobs where they can carry their children to work – cleaning offices early in the mornings or late in the evenings, as a helper in other people's homes, or on job sites where children may be tolerated – a small sewing firm, a laundry, a shed selling fruits and vegetables or roadside shops. The larger the

establishment, the more formal and organised it is, and it will usually not allow children on the premises.

As a result of these problems, women are to a large extent relegated to the informal economy, which increases their vulnerability to unemployment. For one thing, their employment may be not only poorly paid but also part-time or irregular. The normal rules which govern relations in the workplace often are not upheld where the poor, and especially poor women, are concerned. They can be instantly fired or may be threatened by sexual advances or unhealthy or unsafe conditions, which they tolerate in order to keep their jobs. Many injustices are borne simply because the employer knows that the female employee cannot afford to call in third parties to adjudicate any matter.

Unemployment

Women in the Caribbean are almost twice as likely as men to be unemployed. In Trinidad and Tobago, women with a secondary education have a higher unemployment rate than men with any level of education, including those with no education! In addition, women are more likely to be unemployed than men whatever their industry sector. This points to women and men being treated differently in the labour market and it would seem that there is a preference for male workers on the part of employers.

This gender gap in unemployment may stem partly from the types of jobs normally accessed by each gender, as we saw above when looking at career choices. Women tend to be concentrated in fewer occupations such as clerks and service workers, while men are more widely distributed through professional, managerial, manufacturing, agriculture and construction occupations.

Whatever the reason for it, higher unemployment among women is a serious Caribbean-wide problem because of the prevalence of female-headed households.

There is also an inequality in the relative remuneration for work, in that many females are paid less than their male counterparts even when carrying out the same tasks.

Research mini-project

Find out from a local business what the payment scales for various jobs are, and the relative numbers of male and female employees on each. This should be done anonymously (i.e. no names or other personal details of employees should be sought by you the researcher or given by the employer). Analyse the data using graphs and work out whether there is any gender bias with regard to payment for similar tasks or to the employment status of men and women.

ACTIVITY 10.1

Read the extract from a report on gendered workforce participation in Trinidad and Tobago, study Fig. 10.1 and answer the questions below.

1. Define the following terms: (a) FLFPR, (b) CCSP. Describe how these are used in the extract.
2. Describe the gender disparity highlighted by the extract. How does this impact on the gendering of poverty?
3. What trends in the FLFPR does the extract describe? How can these trends alleviate poverty?

Statistics based on the Trinidad and Tobago economy, such as those derived from the Survey of Living Conditions and the Household Budget Survey (HBS), reveal that women have had a higher incidence of poverty than men in all years these surveys were conducted. In 2005 (which is the most recent year national poverty statistics were published), 38 per cent of the poorest households in Trinidad and Tobago were headed by females. One of the major factors affecting poverty among females is their relatively low labour force participation. As in most countries, female labour force participation rates (FLFPR) in Trinidad and Tobago are substantially lower than male participation rates. During the period 2000–2009, the FLFPR averaged 51.5 per cent compared to 77.1 per cent for males. More noteworthy, however, is that Trinidad and Tobago's FLFPR over the ten-year period (2000–2009) was lower than some of its neighbouring countries; Barbados and Jamaica's FLFPRs averaged 65.1 and 57.4 per cent, respectively, over the same ten-year period ... Furthermore, at lower income levels, increases in female participation can help to alleviate poverty, which can have positive inter-generational effects.

Historically, national labour force participation rates have shown a large disparity between men and women. Notwithstanding this, the disparity has been decreasing over the period 2000–2009. During this period, the participation rate for women hovered around 50 per cent. The Continuous Sample Survey of the Population (CSSP) showed that in 2007 the average income for men exceeded women across all listed occupational groupings.

Source: Roopnarine and Ramrattan (2012), pp 183–184.

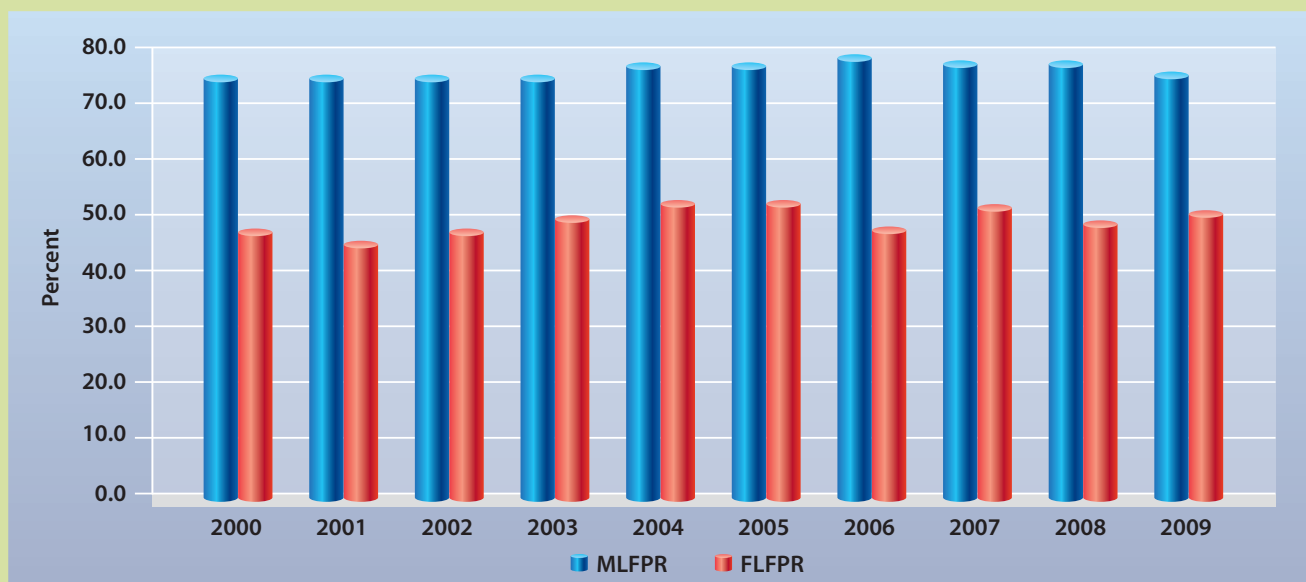


Fig. 10.1 Labour force participation rates by gender in Trinidad and Tobago (2000–2009)

10.1.4 Gendered Poverty

In many countries, the majority of the poor are women, which is referred to as the **feminisation of poverty**, a

The **feminisation of poverty** describes the growing numbers of women who live in poverty.

term which has given its name to a social theory. One of the main predictors of female poverty is single motherhood, and the poverty of women impacts directly on the poverty of children: wherever women live in poverty, so too will their children, whether in rural or urban environments. The prevalence of households headed by single women, in particular, in the Caribbean means that a significant number of children are affected by the same factors that keep women in subservient jobs and vulnerable to chronic and extreme poverty. Women more than men also make up the elderly poor, and natural and gender imbalances are exacerbated by the practice of migrants leaving their offspring in the care of their grandparents.

While the feminisation of poverty is felt worldwide, Brown (2001), who studied the incidence of poverty among a number of different groups including the young and the elderly, states that in the Caribbean the gender disparity in poverty varies – in Jamaica there are higher rates of poverty among women whereas the opposite is the case in Grenada. Women who live in rural areas are among the poorest in the Caribbean. In addition to being poor they are inadequately served with basic health care, training and education and economic opportunities. Their poverty is likely to be chronic as they suffer marginalisation at different levels – gender inequities and material deprivation.

The belief that there is gender inequality inherent in most if not all societies today, including those in the Caribbean, has brought into being a global school of thought called *feminism*. As well as informing the scholarship of some (mostly female) sociologists and other theorists in the social sciences, it has also spawned significant **activism**. You will learn more about Caribbean feminism in Chapter 14.

Activism describes the activities of groups who put their beliefs into action, not only feminists but also environmentalists and members of various political ideologies such as communism, anarchism and nationalism.

What impression do you have of the incidence of female poverty in your country or territory? Does it fit the feminisation of poverty thesis?

10.2

Political ideologies and popular movements

Political ideologies and popular movements have from

Political ideologies are systems of beliefs about governance and power that reflect the needs and aspirations of particular social groups.

time to time challenged the status quo in the Caribbean. The beliefs behind these ideologies are held so strongly that they influence social life as well as the type, style and quality of governance that a country enjoys.

Capitalism, communism and socialism (see Chapter 14) are examples of ideologies. Capitalism is the dominant political ideology in the Caribbean. It emphasises market-led development (minimum of restrictions by the state) and is also known as *free enterprise*.

There were no specific attempts at poverty reduction in the development efforts of the independence era; the emphasis was on increasing economic growth. Yet poverty was a major problem. Some Caribbean thinkers began to consider ways to reduce poverty and raise the quality of life of people by installing alternative political ideologies to that of capitalism. They were influenced by the dependency theorists of Latin America. Dependency theory is an approach to development that emphasises underdevelopment – showing how the colonial condition encouraged dependency and poverty through the imbalance in trading relationships and a mindset that regarded the coloniser as the legitimate source of ideas. Furthermore, these conditions were being exacerbated by modern-day neocolonial trends. To focus on poverty reduction rather than economic growth would have political implications largely because the poor are powerless and the people who are usually in government represent the moneyed classes. To directly target the poor would entail radical measures.

The Marxist-type revolutions of Cuba in 1959 and Grenada in 1979 (Box 10.3), and the attempts to establish similar principles more gradually in Guyana during the 1960s and 1970s and Jamaica in the 1970s (Box 10.4), were directed at increasing human development and especially equity.

ACTIVITY 10.2

1. Suggest TWO reasons why either the state or the market should 'lead' in the process of economic development in your country.
2. Read Box 10.3 on page 246. Explain why the US was so committed to the destabilisation of Cuba once it became a socialist state.

BOX 10.3**Communism in Cuba**

In Cuba the country suffered under a brutal dictator, Fulgencio Batista, an ally of the US. The revolutionary forces were responding to demands from the Cuban people for jobs, health care and land reform. When Fidel Castro declared in 1962 that the revolution was socialist, the USSR became an ally, pumping millions into the economy. Even before that, the US had withdrawn all diplomatic personnel, technical assistance and aid, and instituted an economic embargo that lasted for decades.

The Cuban economy was centrally planned, with the state owning all productive enterprises and property. The population benefited by being able to buy goods and services which were previously priced out of their reach, and by having free health care and better housing. They were enjoying increasing levels of equity and poverty was reduced. However, productivity waned as the centrally planned and subsidised state enterprises became inefficient and corrupt. The Cuban economy was described as 'dependent socialism' as it relied heavily on aid, credit and trade from the Soviet Union. While in the beginning Cubans felt great enthusiasm for the revolution and became involved in the many local assemblies, they soon grew to realise that they were not expected to participate in a substantial way. There was no room for dissent. Thus, empowerment through opportunities to make changes in the course of

their lives became less and less possible. As political repression worsened, even the initial gains of equity were severely compromised. The 1990s threw the Cuban economy into a tailspin as communism was dismantled in the USSR and Eastern Europe. Cuba was now alone, trying to survive without its safety net on the global market. In the meantime, the US intensified the embargo. Castro was forced to institute more liberal policies including opening up Cuba to tourism, making the dollar legal tender, encouraging self-employment and diversifying into citrus, nickel and medical products.

Undoubtedly, to the majority of Cubans in the 1960s and even the 1970s the revolution was necessary to free them from the repressive regime of Batista. One can say that there were major strides towards promoting human development (especially equity). The US, however, was violently opposed to communism; as the superpower in the region, only a few miles away, it played an important role in influencing the process of development in Cuba. Through invasion ('Bay of Pigs' in 1961) and economic sanctions the US tried to destabilise the country. Even though the Castro regime lasted for decades, the US policy of destabilisation severely weakened the economy, causing internal dissension and harsh repression similar to that under the Batista regime. In addition, a viable, resilient economy that could function independently of the USSR was not established.

10.3**Distribution of wealth and resources****10.3.1 Market or State Control?**

Regardless of whether a political ideology is market-driven or state-driven, if development is the goal then each should be tempered with what is necessary to promote the human development goals of equity, productivity and empowerment. Perhaps because the socialist state was under constant attack and censure, it could not be more flexible, a lesson that such states now seem to be learning worldwide. The capitalist states of the Caribbean have fared better because as part of the mainstream they had nothing to prove in terms of trying

to justify alternative ideologies. They did establish a role for the state in a market-driven economy to ensure equity. In most Caribbean countries the state has firmly taken on the role of providing education and health care, but there are partnerships with private providers. States are also able to establish pro-poor services by taxing the private sector and can also intervene in the market directly by imposing controls on prices, again a measure to ensure equity for citizens. However, there is constant debate about how much a state should interfere in the workings of the market. Following a particular ideology, then (whether capitalist or socialist), does not seem to be as important as reconstructing that ideology to ensure development goals – the promotion of equity, productivity, empowerment and sustainability.

BOX 10.4 Jamaica and Socialism

Michael Manley's first term as prime minister of Jamaica lasted from 1972 to 1980. He came to power at a time when Jamaica was experiencing a poverty crisis. The development measures that had been tried after independence were largely unsuccessful. The transition from colonialism to independence and a capitalist economy needed a transformation not only in the economic and political institutions but also in the social situation. There was a large gap in the material circumstances and welfare of the Jamaican people. The policies tried in the years after independence tended to follow the formula of 'industrialisation by invitation'. This encouraged foreign direct investment but it could not increase production and output enough to make a material difference to the population.

Manley felt that the principles of democratic socialism would be beneficial to Jamaica's poor. His goal was to establish a planned economy to equalise opportunity, especially for the poor and dispossessed. The government nationalised most of the large industries and welfare was increased to the poorer sectors of the society. Unfortunately, they did not pay so much attention to productivity. The newly nationalised companies did not function efficiently because of management and retaliatory tactics on the part of those who had to leave but who still controlled access to world markets. The bauxite companies, for example, reduced their imports. The US cut its flows of aid by about 75 per cent. With output down and expenditure up the external debt grew. This situation was exacerbated by **external shocks** such as the OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) oil crisis of the 1970s, when oil prices soared.

An **external shock** is an economic event impinging on an economy from outside that economy.

During the Manley years productivity, measured by GDP, fell some 16 per cent and unemployment and inflation increased. Severely strained for income, the government had to abandon the programmes and policies put in place for the poor.

Edward Seaga, the next prime minister, began dismantling the socialist policies and re-establishing the free market system and friendly relations with the US. Manley's later return to power saw him largely following these policies, thus attesting to a failed socialist experiment. Did Manley hinder the development of Jamaica by pursuing a political ideology that was in marked contrast to the rest of the Commonwealth Caribbean (except for Guyana at this time)? His goal was to reduce the levels of inequality in the society. The capitalist regimes before and after him did not pursue that goal as vigorously – neither did they increase productivity to the levels where significant growth was experienced. The problem does not seem to lie with socialism per se but with how the international community reacts. Unlike Cuba, Manley did not have the communist world to prop up the regime, most probably because he was not interested in building a full communist state. And the whole question of whether Caribbean people, poor or not, are in favour of socialism is still unresolved. The wealthy left Jamaica and Guyana in large numbers. In all three Commonwealth countries where it was tried (Grenada as well), it ended in failure. It raises the vexing question of how to provide for the poor and still be able to pay all the bills.

10.3.2 Social Factors

The distribution of wealth and resources is a factor that can either promote or hinder development as it influences the income generation in the society. Using levels of income as an indicator shows how wealth is distributed among the various socioeconomic groups, and the Gini index (see §9.2.3) measures the level of inequality in the society.

Caribbean countries inherited a society characterised by social stratification (see Chapter 6), a legacy of the plantation economy. The elites (the descendants of the white ruling class and near-whites) owned much of the land and capital. The middle group of coloureds and blacks owned some property and other assets such as

educational credentials (human capital, in other words). Poorer groups lower down the social hierarchy had only their labour power to sell. This inequality in income distribution severely hindered development in many Caribbean countries, and the extent to which Caribbean societies have been able to reduce the levels of poverty and inequality has resulted in increasing human development and more sustainable forms of development.

10.3.3 Poverty

Household and family income surveys measure the ability of citizens to buy basic consumption items – food and non-food items such as education, housing

BOX 10.5

Understanding poverty

One of the reasons why poverty remains a persistent problem for Caribbean governments is that the policies designed to reduce poverty have a particular view of the poor that is misguided and undermines the success of the initiatives. The interesting observation is that the wealthy, the well-to-do and government agencies all feel they know what poverty is like; consequently the measures they implement do not usually have the input of the very people to be helped.

Traditionally the poor are helped through national poverty alleviation schemes where funds are earmarked in the national budget for the social sector and disbursed to ministries dealing with social services and agencies that help the poor and the disabled on a daily basis (NGOs, charities and religious organisations). They give out payments as public assistance and social security as well as supporting organisations helping single-parent families and unwed mothers, and providing unemployed youth with casual labour opportunities. All of these levels of assistance are referred to as a 'safety net' for the poor.

Even in times of economic growth, when there are more funds available for these programmes, the poor remain poor. A basic misunderstanding about poverty lies in the perception that the poor do not have many material goods, so that if these are provided their distress will be alleviated to

some extent. There seems to be a reluctance to understand that poverty is maintained by being powerless. If poor people were to be helped to organise themselves – which is what grassroots community groups try to do – they would be in a better position to make demands and be listened to. The tendency has been to help the poor through philanthropic gestures and through a desire to keep social tensions down.

Recently initiatives have been discussed that are pro-poor. A pro-poor economy is one where planning takes place within an enlightened and informed understanding of where the poor are, what activities they are engaged in and what some of their greatest needs are. Hence, resources are channelled into, for example, rural economies, inner city areas or places where women need help if they are to function effectively in the labour market – early childhood care and education centres, all-day clinics, small urban businesses, and work and study programmes. These are human development initiatives that broaden the choices of the poor and help them to empower themselves.

In countries where the income distribution is less unequal (for example Barbados) some members of the poorer groups are able to access a higher level of educational provision, thus making them eligible for higher-paying jobs, and eventually enabling them to move out of poverty – social mobility. One

indicator used to measure the extent to which members of a society are experiencing social mobility is the index of social and economic equalisation (the degree to which all groups are experiencing similar levels of income, access to goods and services and other opportunities). In Caribbean societies education has been the principal means whereby the poor could change their class boundaries and reduce the extent to which they experience social exclusion and social inequality. In a more 'open' society more citizens are involved in the economy in a productive way, thus contributing to income generation.



Fig. 10.2 Cuban farmers with their team of oxen

and transportation. Using this measure, Haiti recorded the highest poverty levels (76 per cent) for the region. In Guyana about 35 per cent of the population lives in poverty, in Jamaica about 20 per cent, while Antigua and Barbuda (12 per cent) had the lowest incidence of poverty (World Bank, 2005).

Poverty seems to be more widespread in rural areas where agriculture provides the bulk of the income. For example, in 2002 only 16 per cent of the urban population in St Lucia lived in poverty compared to 30 per cent of the rural population. The situation is very similar throughout the Eastern Caribbean, where rural areas tend to be characterised by larger households and unstable incomes owing to both volatile market prices for agricultural goods and weather hazards. In addition, these households tend to have inadequate access to safe drinking water, sewage disposal, electricity supply, transport, education and health care (OECS, 2002). Thus poverty appears to be a good marker for economic development.

Studies of poverty raise the issue that if we are serious about development then we must re-examine our understandings of the causes of poverty. The usual explanation for poverty revolves around the conditions of the poor – family poverty, few resources, debt and limited education. However, development theorists see it as a condition arising out of the social and economic weaknesses in the society. These weaknesses stem in the first instance from a lack of equity among social groups, which becomes entrenched over time; thus to alleviate poverty one must tackle the bases of inequality in the society (Box 10.5).

10.3.4 Inequality

On the Gini index, the highest inequality is in Haiti (see Table 9.2). High inequality has also been measured in Costa Rica, St Lucia, Belize, the Dominican Republic and Guyana. These statistics are among the highest levels of inequality in the world; compare them with, for example, Sweden (23), Kazakhstan (29), Pakistan (30) and the US (36) (CIA, 2014). In some countries high poverty levels coincide with high levels of inequality (for example, Haiti, St Vincent and the Grenadines and Guyana). However, a country may show a relatively low percentage of people living in poverty but the disparity in income between those people and the other socioeconomic groups may also be high (as, for example, in Hong Kong, where the Gini index is almost as high as that in Haiti). Thus, income inequality is a significant and continuing feature of the distribution of wealth in Caribbean countries and raises questions about the extent to which this hinders development.

When there is a large income gap between the different social groups, social stratification becomes entrenched and poorer groups suffer from social inequality and social exclusion. For instance, there will be few opportunities for them to access decent jobs, credit services, relevant training or even proper health care and housing. The poorer the household, the more there is a tendency towards low educational attainment and erratic participation in what training is available. Social exclusion therefore exacerbates the conditions of poverty, making it virtually impossible for the poor to help themselves out of poverty. This has a negative impact on efforts to improve and increase both human development and sustainable development in the society (Thomas and Wint, 2002).

◆ Describe THREE areas that would be of interest to you in reporting on the index of social and economic equalisation for your country.

The distribution of wealth in a society directly influences the extent to which different groups can access the resources of the society. The wealthy have easy access to financial, educational and training resources, which allow them various options and choices that work to their advantage. If inequality is so great that poorer groups cannot access at least some of these resources, then the society would be denied the income that these groups would have generated if they had had the opportunity. Moreover, more public expenditure will have to be allocated towards social welfare. Thus, high levels of income inequality hinder economic as well as human and sustainable development.

10.3.5 Wealth and Class

The distribution of wealth and resources across a country is often directly related to the way that social class is stratified. Social mobility, however, depends on the type of stratification. If a society is stratified according to birth (a caste system) then wealth or lack of it has little effect on social mobility, and indeed in caste-type societies there is very little social mobility of any kind. If a society is stratified according to wealth, however, class boundaries will be more easily crossed, giving a higher level of social mobility. Often such mobility is limited by the opportunities people have to create wealth for themselves through their own efforts. The highest level of mobility is enjoyed by a meritocracy where a person's drive, ability and ambition can all contribute to his or her success.

ACTIVITY 10.3

1. Assess the extent to which the class boundaries are permeable in the society of your country or community. What enables people to cross class boundaries and be upwardly mobile socially? What results in them crossing them in the other direction?
2. How have the boundaries themselves changed in recent years? Is there a growing middle class and shrinking working class? How do people's own perceptions of the class system and their place in it affect their mobility and the class boundaries themselves?

10.4

Entrepreneurs and productivity

While the concept of development has outgrown the strong emphasis on economic growth, it is nevertheless true that development cannot occur without a vibrant and buoyant economy or **productive sector**. Whether

The **productive sector** is the section of the economy concerned with the production of goods and services.

development occurs or not is directly related to the conditions and structures operating within and impacting on the productive sector. It can be thought of as the engine of growth that can have a positive effect on human development and sustainable development, but only if this is a goal that the government and people think is worth pursuing. If not, there can be growth but without development.

The productive sector has traditionally been classified into the following types of economic activity:

- primary or extractive industries (fishing, forestry, farming, mining);
- secondary or manufacturing industries (the processing of raw materials in factories, e.g. agro-industries, bauxite smelting, bottling and canning);
- tertiary industries or services (e.g. teaching, insurance, retailing, transport, tourism).

Many of these industries begin with the activity of one or a small group of *entrepreneurs* who find a niche for their product and develop it. Such entrepreneurs can go on to found global empires employing hundreds of thousands of people. The Virgin group was built in this way by the entrepreneur Richard Branson.

ACTIVITY 10.4

Using documented sources, sketch a pie chart showing the structure of the productive sector in your country (i.e. the percentage distribution of primary, secondary and tertiary industries). In your opinion, what is an ideal distribution for optimal economic development? Give reasons for your answer.

Recently, another category has been added – quaternary, which includes research and development activities and computer- and knowledge-based industries which do not need a specific location (also called ‘footloose industries’). These are often dominated by entrepreneurs, as they do not require massive investment in plant and the employment of a workforce.

10.4.1 The Importance of Service Industries

The colonial Caribbean was treated as a primary producer of raw materials – mainly agricultural commodities – which were exported to Europe for processing. Thus, the Caribbean does not have a strong tradition in manufacturing or secondary industries. There is, however, a well-developed tertiary or services sector today, which holds a promise for the future, because reliance on agriculture has proven to be misguided in the past and manufacturing on a large scale is just not an option for most of the smaller territories. In addition, the possibilities of quaternary industries are now being explored in terms of the ‘dot com’ economy and e-shopping.

10.4.2 Influences on the Productive Sector

Some of the most important factors that impact on the productive sector, and thus on Caribbean development (in terms of boosting economic growth), are as follows:

- **Competitiveness.** To a large extent the agricultural commodities and manufactured goods produced by Caribbean countries are high-cost items, largely because labour is highly priced compared to other developing countries and some inputs need to be imported. These products will not sell easily on the world market unless they enjoy some preferential protection in the form of *tariffs*.
- **Demand.** The goods produced in the Caribbean (e.g. clothing, handicrafts, beverages, paper napkins, cosmetics, appliances) do not command a large market either inside or outside the region because others can also supply them. However, promising markets have opened up for Caribbean foods and preserves (e.g. jerk seasonings, confectionery, pepper sauce, ketchup and coconut milk) as well as alcohol and soft drinks in the

Caribbean diaspora in places like New York, London and Toronto. Future growth may lie in creating similar unique and 'niche products' which others cannot supply.

- **Productivity.** Agriculture has low labour productivity because of the tradition of manual labour and preferential trade agreements. Labour productivity is an indicator of efficiency in agriculture. Operations that are highly automated show much higher production rates per worker, but labour has to be well educated and technically skilled to perform in these environments (e.g. oil and petrochemicals, electricity production, microelectronics, networked systems). Opportunities for post-secondary training in a wide range of skills will better equip labour to function in these settings.
- **Infrastructure.** Some Caribbean territories do not have fully functioning telephone systems, reliable and safe systems of public transport, regular water and electricity supplies, reliable telecommunications services and a quick turnaround at ports. In addition, ministries which control certain aspects of trade and industry have a tendency to tie up business in complicated bureaucratic procedures. Thus, the institutional framework within which the productive sector functions must recognise producers as partners.
- **Investment climate.** While private domestic investment and foreign direct investment (FDI) in the Caribbean has been high, the investment climate needs to be boosted to be more encouraging to investors. Two particular areas of concern are productivity and economic diversification. The price of labour is high in the Caribbean compared to that in other developing countries, so investors will not be attracted unless we develop products that are competitive and unique. Such products would command higher prices because of their uniqueness (few competitors), and labour productivity would therefore increase (more value earned per worker). Local investors suggest that governments can play a big role in encouraging entrepreneurship in new areas by reducing risks for entrepreneurs. Subsidies or loans which can reduce the costs of experimentation or risk will go a long way in generating a good investment climate that should ultimately result in more competitive products.
- **Debt.** One of the factors that can severely hinder Caribbean countries in their quest for sustainable development is the level to which they are indebted to foreign loan agencies. In the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), for example, debt almost doubled between 1997 and 2003. Guyana and Jamaica have long-standing debt commitments, Belize

saw a 100 per cent increase in its debt in 2003, and Dominica has recently experienced a debt crisis (World Bank, 2005). Paying huge sums of interest on these debt accumulations tends to nullify any growth in the economy. It is not easy to solve the debt problem because it is a function of the imbalance of trade, whereby we import so much more than we produce. The tendency to borrow for huge developmental projects such as airport construction, and to finance educational reform and the building of schools, where expensive cost overruns are incurred, as well as corruption and mismanagement, also increases our debt.

- **External shocks.** The debt problem is also made worse by 'external shocks' to the productive sector. In studying development in the Caribbean we need to keep in mind that our population, our economies and our markets are small, compared to the wider world. We are thus in a vulnerable position when adverse circumstances or shocks occur. All shocks involve us in huge expenses which increase our indebtedness. For example, after the impasse between the EU, the WTO and the banana producers of the Caribbean, Europe's preferential treatment of ACP bananas was discontinued (see Box 11.2). This was an extreme shock for countries like St Lucia and Dominica, where employment and incomes decreased appreciably in the latter half of the 1990s. Other kinds of shocks that seem to occur with increased frequency are natural hazards such as hurricanes (see Chapter 5). The tremendous dislocation of the economy in Grenada in 2004 after the passage of Hurricane Ivan, soon to be followed by Emily in 2005, accounts for the reduction in economic growth and the increase in poverty in that country.
- **Technology.** Current investment in knowledge about ICTs in the region is inadequate and cannot effectively support the needs and expansion of businesses and industries which have to compete in a globalising market. Technical expertise needs to be deepened and constantly upgraded in electronic communication, e-marketing and e-commerce, designing web pages to promote products, compiling digital databases, using the Internet to respond to customers in a timely fashion and be attuned to their needs, as well as in the infrastructural areas of networking and connectivity. Local businesses need ICTs to boost their operations, and foreign firms need to know that Caribbean labour is technically up to the challenge.

The productive sector, then, can promote or hinder development through its impact on economic growth. More and more it seems that the traditional economies need to be boosted by innovations and efficiencies, including a

search for niche products. Investors are likely to invest if the economy shows some signs of growth. And growth is needed to withstand the effects of any external shocks, which are inevitable for small, vulnerable island economies.

10.5

Use of technology

As we have already seen, modern technology is very important for economic development, especially if we are to compete with the industries of other countries. Technology may include:

- Internet and other computer-based technologies;
- agricultural machinery;
- factory machinery for textile, food processing and other industries;
- marine technologies related to navigation, fuel efficiency and other ship-based technologies.



Fig. 10.3 Learning to use technology

BOX 10.6

Modern technology in the Caribbean

1 Barbados

In 2011 a major new mechanisation scheme was announced for Barbadian farming, focusing especially on small- to medium-sized farms, under 700 acres. The scheme offered a discount to these smaller farms to purchase agricultural services designed to help them with mechanisation. It was recognised that a lack of mechanisation was disadvantaging such farmers in competition with the major farms and also with agribusinesses overseas. It was not only a question of funding – that the farmers had too little capital to invest in the machinery – but also that the institutional framework was lacking. Government, via the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation, and the private sector were both involved in organising the scheme, which was seen to be of potential national benefit in helping farmers to produce more food and reduce Barbados' reliance on imports.

2 St Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG)

Investment is being encouraged in light industry, specifically to foster development, through an organisation known simply as Invest SVG. Existing ports at Kingstown and Campden Park are to be used, together with the main Joshua airport, and a new jetport is proposed for the island of Argyle. Light industrial plants already exist in the country to produce concrete blocks, furniture, glass products, textiles, jewellery, crafts, plastics and packaging, as well as the more traditional food and soft drink processing.

The country is also using its *creative economy* – the entertainment industry in all its forms, together with festivals such as Vincy Mas, and fashion – to fuel sustainable development. For example, the Hollywood blockbuster film *Pirates of the Caribbean* used the islands as a location, putting them firmly on the global entertainment map. Performing musicians in St Vincent are also using modern technology to set up music recording studios to create marketable recordings.

ACTIVITY 10.5

Read the case studies in Box 10.6 and answer these questions:

1. Describe the type of modern technology being developed in (a) Barbados and (b) SVG.
2. How do these differ? Are there any similarities?
3. Relate these initiatives to (a) economic development in the traditional sense and (b) human development in the more modern conception.
4. Which of these developments do you think is more likely to be successful?

10.6

Natural and human-made disasters

Natural disasters are one type of environmental factor which hinders development in the Caribbean, namely hurricanes and volcanic activity (see Chapter 5). Four or five hurricanes every year do at least some damage to the islands in the Greater and Lesser Antilles, as well as to Belize, and the volcanic eruptions in Montserrat almost destroyed that society and economy. In St Vincent volcanic eruption remains an ever-present threat. Earthquakes, while a continuing feature of life, are felt more strongly on the western edge of the Caribbean Plate.

Environmental hazards cannot be avoided, but as we saw in Chapter 5, the risks associated with loss of life and destruction of buildings and crops can be minimised. When an environmental disaster wreaks havoc, economic growth is reduced and human welfare is jeopardised as many may face dislocation, poverty and destitution. It makes good sense, therefore, since environmental hazards are a continuing feature of life in the Caribbean, that we should do as much as possible to minimise risks. However, Caribbean societies seem to face a stumbling block here, moving at a snail's pace in enacting legislation directed at disaster mitigation, or even devising and implementing basic environmental indicators.

Based on your own observations and insights, outline what a rationally coordinated system of policy measures would entail if a Caribbean country is to deal effectively with any natural disaster.

While all groups may suffer some loss in the event of a natural disaster, the poor tend to suffer the most because they have scant resources (for example, surplus cash, insurance cover) with which to rebuild their lives. That the poor are the main casualties may be the reason why we hear about disaster preparedness and disaster management strategies but they do not seem to be realised in serious and purposeful ways. Such a scenario is typical until a particularly serious disaster strikes. It is only then that wealthier groups realise that widespread dislocation and destitution among the poor directly impacts on

their own business interests and that infrastructural damage makes recovery difficult. The factor hindering development in this instance is not the natural disaster in itself but the half-hearted attempts to devise a rationally coordinated system of policy measures to deal with the event.

Disasters caused by human activities also have a negative impact on development, especially sustainability. Big business interests tend to pollute the environment and poor farmers, especially on hill slopes, engage in practices leading to soil erosion. Again these cannot be categorised only as environmental problems which could possibly be solved by legislation to enforce cleaner procedures in factories or land reclamation schemes. The modernisation effects of large-scale capital enterprises such as industrial complexes and mining operations tend to be viewed favourably by the government and development planners in a country. To attract investment for such projects is no mean achievement. As a result, governments are slow to enforce regulations that penalise companies for any harm they cause to the environment. The idea of development as the enactment of human values can therefore be criticised, depending on which values are being privileged. In this case, values to do with productivity and output (economic growth) are privileged over environmental health.

One of the major problems caused or at least exacerbated by human activities is climate change (Box 10.7). Both natural disasters and those encouraged by human actions hinder economic growth and reduce the sustainability of development efforts. The occasional nature of hurricanes seems to engage governments in a game of probability and an assumption that this year they will be spared. This is a careless and irrational attitude to adopt if all other efforts target development. Human-induced disasters, too, such as soil erosion, seem hardly to engage prolonged attention by decision-makers. One may ask why, given the decades-long quest in the Caribbean for development, the environment can be so sidelined? The inevitable conclusion seems to be that the values dominating the development process did not initially include sustainability, and so efforts to insert it now run up against the power of big business interests and ignorance. The rather lackadaisical attempts to curb soil erosion and other human-induced disasters speak to a harsh reality that, although there is much talk about human development, people still tend to equate development with production and economic output.

BOX 10.7

Climate change

There is an ongoing debate about climate change but to a large extent major world bodies have accepted statistical data showing long-term changes in the distribution of weather patterns and weather events. They emphasise that the accelerated changes they see are unlikely to be a natural occurrence and are more likely to be due to **anthropogenic global warming**. Burning of fossil fuels leads to increasing

Anthropogenic global warming refers to the rise in temperatures of the earth's atmosphere and oceans induced by human activities.

levels of *greenhouse gases* (e.g. carbon dioxide) in the atmosphere. These trap heat in the lower atmosphere and do not allow it to flow freely into space. Air pollution caused by human activities is one of the primary ways in which greenhouse gases are added to the atmosphere. The warming up of the

planet is an environmental health issue because it poses a number of risks to human populations.

Climate experts predict not only heavier rainfall and more powerful hurricanes but also rainier wet seasons and drier dry seasons affecting crop production and resulting in food scarcity. Periods of drought will become more common and last longer. Constant high temperatures are driving the melting of the ice caps and so sea levels are rising. An increase in the number of intense hurricanes likely to affect the region is also predicted, because hurricanes form partly as a response to high sea surface temperatures. Warmer temperatures also cause sea levels to rise, as the ice sheets at the North and South Poles melt into the oceans. (See <http://geology.com/sea-level-rise/> for a useful interactive map showing the effects of sea level rises worldwide.) These changes represent a direct threat to life and livelihood in all low-lying coastal communities in the Caribbean.

◆ Explain why the activities of small farmers in exacerbating soil erosion cannot be solved by giving attention only to environmental factors.

10.7

Global economic conditions

The way in which the global economy is working has profound implications not only for the Caribbean but also for all developing countries. There is a basic *economic cycle* which fluctuates between periods when global economies are growing and periods when they contract (enter negative growth) or stagnate. This is an integral component of a capitalist system of economic relations.

10.7.1 External Shocks

These cycles may be made more extreme when conditions change in key industries, or the financial markets are subject to unusual impacts. In the 1970s, for example, the establishment of OPEC, which manages the production of oil-exporting countries, led to a sharp rise in the price of oil. This external shock caused worldwide inflation and even some industrialised countries felt the force of

it. The United Kingdom, for example, had to apply to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for help after inflation hit 25 per cent.

The global economy is affected not only by purely economic concerns but also by political events, for example when there is political uncertainty or instability in a region, particularly when that region is a major producer of oil. The possibility of poor relations between powerful countries can also have this effect. For example, prices rose sharply in 2004–5 after the NATO invasion of Iraq, a major oil producer, during the so-called War on Terror, and again in 2014 because of the instability of Ukraine after a coup by pro-western activists. The latter situation was complicated by the alleged involvement of Russia in dismembering Ukraine after the autonomous region of Crimea voted to return to Russian control, which led to a sharp rise in the price of oil. This reflected a fear that worsening relations with Russia might lead to Russian supplies of oil and gas to Western Europe being cut off.

ACTIVITY 10.6

Carry out some research on the fluctuating price of oil over a period of ten years or more. Plot the figures on a graph (or download a suitable graph from the Internet) and try to identify any political events that may have sparked off sudden price rises.

10.7.2 Financial Crises

There are also global crises and catastrophes such as the credit crunch of 2008 and subsequent recession (Box 10.8) which affect both developed and developing countries.

10.7.3 Economic Forecasts

Global conditions are often treated like the weather, and are subject to expert predictions. Box 10.9 contains an extract from a global economic forecast for 2014–15 published by the United Nations in early 2014.

BOX 10.8 The credit crunch and global recession

The financial year 2007–8 saw a sharp downturn in the world economy, partly due to what has become known as the 'credit crunch'. During the period between 2000 and 2007, banks increasingly drove a debt culture by encouraging customers (individual and corporate) to borrow more than they could afford to repay. This culture of debt also affected loan managers in the financial institutions themselves, who began to package up mortgages and other loans and sell them on to other banks and financial institutions for cash. The buyers frequently did not examine carefully enough the nature of the loans they were purchasing, and many financial institutions ended up with far too much **bad debt**. Interest rates in many leading countries were low, increasing the temptation to both banks and customers to set up loans. When rates eventually rose, however, customers would be unable to pay the interest on their loans. A collective madness seemed to possess financial markets, in which the concept of **boom and bust** was forgotten. When the US property market dipped, a number of US financial institutions ran into trouble because of their involvement in risky loans, and people's confidence in the safety of financial institutions was shaken. Banks began to refuse to lend money to each other or to businesses.

In autumn 2008 Lehman Brothers, an important investment bank in the USA, went bankrupt. For a short time there was a real risk that the whole global financial system would go into meltdown, with bank failures which would affect not only individual savers but also the assets of governments, multinational companies and pension funds invested in them. After intense debate among the finance ministers of the G8 group of countries (representing the wealthiest nations on earth), the decision was made to prop up banks and other institutions (at great expense to taxpayers) in order to prevent the whole financial system from collapsing, which would have thrown the world into a new major depression to rival the

great Depression of the 1930s. Credit became much more difficult and expensive to obtain, both for financial institutions and their customers, since the experience of bad debt of 2007–8 had made financial institutions afraid to lend to each other, and they also distrusted customers' ability to repay their loans.

Because of interconnections within the global financial system, the ripples from this crisis were felt around the world. From 2008 until 2012, the world entered a deep **recession** in which growth stagnated and some economies contracted. Some countries could not sustain the debts they had incurred during the boom period of the early 2000s and had to be bailed out by their neighbours or fellow economic community members (Greece, for example, has relied heavily on the eurozone for assistance, and Iceland, a non-EU member, effectively went bankrupt in October 2008). In other places where financial institutions ran into trouble they had to be propped up by the government, again at taxpayers' expense. For example, in the Caribbean the collapse of CL Financial in 2009 led to a government bailout to preserve the country's financial system from collapse.

Bad debt refers to loans that are unlikely ever to be repaid because the borrower does not have the funds to do so.

Boom and bust is a colloquial term for the recurring situation where times of inflated prosperity (known as boom) are inevitably succeeded by times when conditions are less good (known, when they are bad enough, as bust).

Recession is a period of economic downturn when there is zero or negative economic growth.

BOX 10.9

United Nations global economic forecast 2014–15

Global growth continues to face headwinds

The world economy has experienced subdued growth for another year in 2013, unable to meet even the modest projections many institutional forecasters made earlier, including the *World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2013*. According to the information available in November, world gross product (WGP) is estimated to have grown by 2.1 per cent in 2013, lower than the baseline forecast of 2.4 per cent published in *WESP 2013*, but still better than the alternative pessimistic scenario presented in that report. Underperformance in the world economy was observed across almost all regions and major economic groups. Most developed economies continued struggling in an uphill battle against the lingering effects of the financial crisis, grappling in particular with the challenges of taking appropriate fiscal and monetary policy actions. A number of emerging economies, which had already experienced a notable slowdown in the past two years, encountered new headwinds during 2013 on both international and domestic fronts. Some signs of improvements have shown up more recently: the euro area has finally come out of a protracted recession, with GDP for the region as a whole returning to growth; a few large emerging economies, including China, seem to have backstopped a further slowdown and are poised to strengthen. Premised on a set of assumptions, WGP is forecast to grow at a pace of 3.0 and 3.3 per cent for 2014 and 2015, respectively. Again, this baseline forecast is made in the context of a number of uncertainties and risks emanating from possible policy missteps and factors beyond the economic domain.

Despite the notable differentials in the growth rates among different groups of countries, cyclical movements in growth remain synchronised. While the average growth of middle-income countries continues to be the highest, growth for the less developed countries (LDCs) is expected to strengthen in 2014–2015.

Among developed countries, the United States

of America is estimated to grow at a meagre pace of 1.6 per cent in 2013, significantly lower than the 2.8 per cent growth of the previous year. Fiscal tightening and a series of political gridlocks over budgetary issues during the year have weighed heavily on growth. Monetary policy has been extremely accommodative, but it has had greater effect on boosting equity prices than on stimulating the real economy. Expectations arising in mid-2013 about the possible tapering of the quantitative easing programme caused some jitters in financial markets, pushing up long-term interest rates. A moderate improvement earlier in 2013 in such areas as housing and employment lost momentum towards the end of the year. In the outlook, assuming that the future unwinding of the monetary easing will be smooth, GDP is expected to increase 2.5 and 3.2 per cent for 2014 and 2015, respectively. Risks remain on the downside, however, particularly because political wrangling over the budget may linger for several years ...

Growth in Latin America and the Caribbean decelerated in 2013, to a pace of 2.6 per cent, but is forecast to improve to 3.6 and 4.1 per cent in 2014 and 2015, respectively. In South America, Brazil is still growing at a subdued pace, curbed by weak external demand, volatility in international capital flows and tightening monetary policy. The expected improvement in the outlook will depend on strengthening global demand. Private consumption has been supportive of growth in many South American economies. Growth in Mexico and Central America is expected to accelerate in 2014–2015, supported by better performance of manufacturing exports and stable domestic demand, as well as structural adjustment. Growth in the Caribbean has been hampered by weak external demand – for the tourism sector in particular – and weaker commodity prices, but is expected to strengthen in the outlook.

Source: <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/index.shtml>; *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2013* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.13.II.C.2), available from http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/wesp_current/wesp2013.pdf.

ACTIVITY 10.7

1. Read the extract from a UN forecast in Box 10.9 and judge for yourself how accurate it has been in terms of global economic conditions as they have actually been experienced (a) globally and (b) by the countries of the Caribbean.
2. Do some individual research to discover current economic forecasts for the Caribbean region.

10.8

Quality and relevance of education

Education has long been linked with development in both popular thought and the minds of government ministers. Indeed, the commitment to economic development could be said to be the main driver for education policies over the past fifty years, if not longer.

10.8.1 A Historical Perspective

As we saw in chapter 8, historically colonial education focused on access to elementary education for the masses, but secondary and tertiary education only for those of the higher social classes (§8.2.4). Various government commissions on education sent out by Britain wanted to introduce agriculture and various forms of technical-vocational education since the colonies needed to be more self-sufficient in food as well as to have a supply of architects, masons, plumbers, carpenters and builders to assist in infrastructure and development.

In the early years of independence, Caribbean governments increased access to secondary education, mainly using loans from international financial agencies. A burgeoning adolescent population was still not fully catered for, however, though most Caribbean countries had reached the goal of universal primary education (UPE) before they became independent. There were also moves to modernise the curriculum, with the aim of turning out students educated in a way that would kick-start development. This followed new ideas such as human capital theory, which taught that education could be harnessed to development in a way that would benefit the whole country rather than individuals alone. In other words, the more a country invested in education – building schools, training teachers, ensuring that secondary education was expanded – the better its chances of enhancing its development potential. Many developing countries followed this advice, whether they could afford to or not. However, it was not many years before this venture was seen as a vast and expensive failure.

Planners and policymakers had jumped onto the bandwagon that showed a clear link between investment in education and economic development. They did not stop to consider how these graduates of the system – those with credentials and those without – were going to make economic development happen. Without sufficient jobs available for graduates of secondary and tertiary education, and only a small number starting up small businesses as entrepreneurs, there was quickly a rise in unemployment, especially among those who had worked so hard to gain

academic or technical qualifications. In many cases their training was too specific – e.g. in plumbing or masonry – whereas what was needed was individuals who could work flexibly in unfamiliar settings and take up training opportunities where employment actually existed. Eventually the pendulum swung full circle and both educators and planners realised that attention must be paid to early childhood care and education (ECCE) as well as primary education to ensure that the secondary graduate had the necessary skills to engage with lifelong learning, including the ability to adapt to modern working practices and new industries.

10.8.2 Education Today

Reforms in education today focus on upgrading the quality of the system, though in some ways this is still informed by the belief that quality education will deliver development.

Improving teacher training

Teachers are socialised into what is a ‘good education’ based on their own experiences. Hence, many teach at cross purposes to the reformed vision of education and actually jeopardise the success of the reforms. It is becoming increasingly mandatory now that teachers undergo professional development training before they set foot in a classroom – particularly apt for the secondary school system. Primary school teachers have had a long history of training.

Developing a more relevant curriculum

Relevance relates not only to the demands of the economic system but also to the history and culture of pupils. For example, the curricula in primary and secondary schools do not treat in any depth the homelands from which African and Indian peoples come. This needs to be addressed.

Fostering respect for indigenous education

Great strides have been made in integrating Caribbean elements into the school curriculum, such as Caribbean research into our history, including rewriting it from the perspective of captured and colonised people. CXC subjects such as Art & Design use our inherited cultural technologies to manufacture, construct and portray different art forms.

Adopting the individualised curriculum

The emphasis now on inclusive education means that all persons should be educated no matter what their handicaps, abilities or circumstances. There are also moves towards the individualised curriculum, where each pupil learns

slightly differently, with their tasks based on individual aptitude and ability. Distance education, for example, enables previously isolated populations to engage with learning materials with the help of a course tutor.

Intelligent use of media and technology

The emphasis in teacher training today is on integrating new technologies into the classroom. There is ongoing experimentation in using computers in schools and adopting a policy of BYOD (bring your own device – such as tablets, smartphones) to access the vast range of subject content on the Internet.

Less reliance on traditional examination and selection

Examinations become less stressful if students know that they are going into the exam room with some marks, derived from their internal or school-based assessment. They have the opportunity to achieve high marks in this component, which gives them a better overall chance of passing the individual subject. The Common Entrance has been abolished in some countries and modified in others so that students carry over coursework marks.

Creating a more student-centred focus in schools

Previously, teachers placed a great emphasis on teaching. Nowadays, in an effort to be more student-friendly and put the student at the centre of the operations of schools, the focus has shifted to learning. If teachers organise lessons around how children learn, then classrooms ought to be places where student engagement and enjoyment become a priority.

Caribbean countries have accepted international trends which now see human development as the overarching goal in improving societies, including the United Nations' vision of Education For All (EFA), which stresses inclusive education (§8.2.4).

These ideas form the basis of government rhetoric, yet in schools many observers assert that nothing much has changed. Standard operating procedures for the most part still sort students by ability and academic achievement and allocate them to different classes, curricula and ultimately to different schools and labour market chances, a process known as *streaming*. This selection process is a legacy of the colonial education system which many believe does not aid Caribbean students today, and it can be argued that adding layers of reforms is simply tinkering with the system. Even though more and more young people graduate from schools, the contradictory situation persists that education continues to be a factor in maintaining inequality in society.

10.8.3 Using Modern Technology

Learning in the twenty-first century, not only in the Caribbean but also worldwide, has the potential to be radically altered by the knowledge, equipment, tools and software being driven by the global information and communication revolution. This includes:

- **Distance learning**, especially at the tertiary level. For example, the non-campus territories of the Caribbean now form the Open Campus of the UWI, where classes are mostly online. Materials can be downloaded via the Internet, and tutors are in email contact with their students. In some courses students can take part in online seminars.
- **Learning platforms and webinars** are useful aspects of online learning. A *learning platform* works by linking students and tutors through a registration system. A lecturer or tutor can manage a small group as well as a class of as many as 500 persons by uploading lectures, PowerPoint presentations, wikis, videos and audio tapings which students can download and study when convenient. Learners can also tune into *webinars* and content streamed on the Internet. Skype connections help them to interact with their peers and lecturers. Small groups can be carved out of large classes and a tutor assigned to each group so that they can hold discussion forums where the thread of the discussion is preserved and all contributions are monitored. In such a case the tutor can directly contact someone who is not contributing and urge him or her to do so.
- **Online modalities** of instruction and assessment help to increase inclusion and reduce inequities. This impacts not only on young people, but also on mature students. For example, the elderly, those who are ill, the working population or those who have to stay home for whatever reason, can all continue their education, and not be limited because they cannot attend a face-to-face class.
- **Blended learning** options include online learning opportunities with periods where students have to attend classes together at a site. Many students who are free to attend face-to-face classes actually prefer blended learning modalities. Through these options the Caribbean can make great strides in increasing the percentage of the population achieving a tertiary education qualification.

Because of these distance learning possibilities, there are many foreign tertiary education providers in the Caribbean today. This is a clear example of globalisation at work (see Chapter 11). Higher education can be big business, both in the Caribbean and elsewhere. These

international providers offer more options for study, flexible delivery of tuition and materials and (perhaps not least) the lure of a foreign university credential.

Research mini-project

Carry out a survey of distance learning in tertiary education for Caribbean students. Carry out Internet research to find out which educational institutions use distance learning for tertiary education, and what subjects and modalities they offer. Select a subject and research distance learning provision in detail, then choose which provider (Caribbean or non-Caribbean) you consider offers the best educational experience.

10.9

Tourism

Tourism is the biggest industry in the world today and all Caribbean countries, whether long developed as tourist centres or ‘off the beaten track’, are looking to attract more income from tourism. The general idea is that tourism has the potential to increase economic growth and, through that, economic development. We have already seen, though, that increased growth as reflected in increased GNP per capita, for example, does not necessarily result in improvements in human welfare or poverty reduction. Unfortunately, the way tourism is presently organised in Caribbean countries arguably may be hindering development rather than promoting it.

10.9.1 Caribbean Tourist Destinations

Although there is some **native tourism**, it is largely the

Native tourism refers to tourism within a country, including day and weekend trips.

tastes and interests of the foreigner which dictate what type of tourism product will be promoted, and it is the finance and expertise of foreign companies which have developed the Caribbean tourist industry.

Tourists visiting the Caribbean come mainly from North America and Europe. Hence, economic prosperity in these countries directly impacts upon the Caribbean. Proximity is the main factor accounting for the large number of American visitors. Cuba was the preferred destination until the 1960s, when it became a communist state. Americans then chose Jamaica, the Bahamas and Antigua, where a traditional tourist package was available – sun, sea and sand. Barbados has always had an English

clientele, possibly because its tourist industry developed during the colonial era and it was seen as an outpost of the empire that was very ‘British’. Today, both European and American tourists are found all over the region.

Some Caribbean countries have developed as world-class tourist destinations: Jamaica, Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, the Virgin Islands and St Lucia are the most popular. These countries are better able to offer what the tourist wants – a warm location (there is a definite seasonal aspect to Caribbean tourism, with many visitors arriving in the colder months of the northern winter), stretches of pristine white sandy beaches, calm seas and varied types of accommodation (from luxury hotels and all-inclusive resorts to cheaper hotels and apartments, as well as guest houses). Fig. 10.4 shows a fairly typical tourist resort.

◆ **What effect do western marketing strategies have on the people of the Caribbean region when they portray the Caribbean as a mythic, exotic location?**

10.9.2 Specialised Tourism Products

As tourists have become more sophisticated and demanded a different experience, so the tourism product has changed. This has given other Caribbean countries a chance to develop tourist attractions of a different kind. For example:

- **Ecotourism.** Some Caribbean countries, such as Dominica, have resolved to develop tourism in keeping with environmentally sound principles and to resist the high-rise hotels associated with mass tourism. In Dominica, Belize, Guyana and Suriname, the rainforests, and their flora and fauna, cater for the ‘nature lover’ (especially those interested in bird-watching). Special reserves and sanctuaries, such as the Mountain Pine Ridge in Belize and coral reefs, are also popular with this group.
- **Adventure tourism.** In Guyana and Suriname the great rivers offer whitewater rafting and canoeing and expeditions are mounted into the interior, for example to Kaieteur Falls in Guyana. Hunting is growing in importance too in Dominica, and mountain climbing in St Lucia.
- **Sports tourism.** This is usually associated with sea sports – surfing and kite boarding, sailing, scuba diving, snorkelling, deep-sea big game fishing and powerboat racing. Specifically, there is the Grenada Yacht Club Race, the Spring Regatta of Sint Maarten and the Blue Marlin Competition in Curaçao. Recently, with



Fig. 10.4 View of the Pitons from Anse Chastanet Resort, St Lucia

the advent of Twenty20 cricket, there is a good deal of native tourism occurring as Caribbean people visit each country following the tournaments.

- **Health tourism.** Typically this was found where people came to bathe in mineral-charged waters thought to be beneficial for various ailments, especially in volcanic areas: for example, Bath, Jamaica and in St Lucia, Dominica and Montserrat, where there are many hot springs. Today world-famous hotel chains have established spas and health resorts in the Caribbean to cater for those who want to detoxify, reduce stress and have a Caribbean vacation at the same time.
- **Enclave tourism.** The 'playground of the rich and famous' and 'fun in the sun' are promotional ideas of the Caribbean that encourage all sorts of hedonistic behaviour. The extreme antics of thousands of American college students enjoying Spring Break every year are well known. Usually all-inclusive hotels catering only to couples promote wild and carefree behaviour such as nudity and promiscuity as 'attractions'.
- **Festival tourism.** Some Caribbean festivals have in recent years been deliberately promoted to attract the extra-regional tourist. Examples include carnivals such as Kadooment in Barbados, the St Lucia Jazz festival, the St Kitts Music Festival, Reggae Sunsplash in Jamaica, the World Creole Music Festival of Dominica and the Maroon Festival of Carriacou.
- **Cruise-ship tourism.** Many Caribbean islands have constructed docking facilities for the major cruise-

ship lines – Carnival, Royal Caribbean and Princess – because each vessel carries upwards of two thousand tourists, a rich potential source of foreign exchange. Interestingly, these visitors are more attracted to the 'floating theme park' on which they are sailing and tend to spend little in the few hours during which they visit a Caribbean island.

To a large extent it is US and European interests – international hotel chains, the travel industry, financial and investment companies – which help to promote and develop these tourism products in the Caribbean. The big hotels and the more recently established all-inclusive resorts with extensive waterfront real estate are mostly owned and financed by foreign capital. Caribbean people have sought to cash in on the influx of tourists, however:

- by setting up as vendors at the ports of call of cruise-ships;
- by acting as taxi drivers and guides;
- by developing local businesses such as car rental companies, restaurants and local art and craft shops;
- by the strategic staging of cultural events.

There are also unfortunate ways of wresting money and other valuables from the tourist; as the numbers of tourists rise there tends to be an increase in crime (mainly theft), especially in areas of high unemployment.

Few Caribbean countries can boast that nationals own any of their largest hotels or resorts. One of the few exceptions to this theme of foreign domination is Gordon 'Butch' Stewart of Jamaica, who created the Sandals and

Beaches all-inclusive resorts and spas in Jamaica, which have since spread to Antigua, St Lucia, Turks and Caicos and the Bahamas. This, however, is a rare local success story. On the whole, Caribbean tourism is controlled by foreign interests and events and is influenced by the world environmental lobby (§10.9.4).

As we have seen, even in those Caribbean countries where tourism is most developed, it is largely controlled by foreign financiers and investors and world-famous hotel chains, and is dependent on international tour companies and cruise-ship companies to bring the tourists. Most of the profits thus seep away through all these channels, though where tourism is dominant (as in the Bahamas, Jamaica, Barbados, the US Virgin Islands, the Turks and Caicos and Antigua and Barbuda), the income remaining in the country is significant, and higher than that from other sectors of the economy. If ways can be devised to increase the proportion of the income from tourism which stays in the Caribbean, then tourism will be well poised to contribute to economic development.

The growth of tourism in the Caribbean has been rather ad hoc, with some countries more able to take advantage of airline routes and more able to offer a traditional tourist package of sun, sand and sea. As we have seen, the initiative has usually come from abroad, from companies with an international reputation in delivering some aspect of the tourist product. Local input has built on these initiatives, but these individual private or government-sponsored projects scarcely thought of tourism as a planned, strategic development enterprise. Tourism grew as the traditional agricultural export sector collapsed. Its growth was thus accidental and hasty, in some cases leading to many of the challenges associated with tourism today – environmental damage, high-rise hotel complexes in the most scenic parts of the country, marginalisation of local populations, inflation, the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, as well as the incursion of western values that threaten local ways of life.

10.9.3 Challenges to Tourism

The three main problems or challenges facing Caribbean tourism are that:

- tourism should contribute more to human welfare;
- the dependency on foreign institutions should be lessened;
- the tourism industry should be put within a national and even regional development framework.

These issues tend to undermine the contributions that tourism is making – increased GNP, increased employment, greater promotion for Caribbean culture, more efficient utilities and enhanced infrastructure. Current thinking

about tourism advocates the development of sustainable tourism and therefore in the Caribbean there is the need to deal with the challenges posed above.

ACTIVITY.10.8

1. Identify ways in which the three challenges highlighted here can be met.
2. Suggest TWO measures that can be realistically put in place to enable Caribbean countries to reap greater benefits from tourism.

10.9.4 Sustainable Tourism

In 2004 the World Tourism Organization defined **sustainable tourism** in terms of its impact on the host

Sustainable tourism refers to practices that cause little harm to the environment, even while it is being exploited for economic purposes. Both the natural and social environment are recognised.

country. It advocates tourism policies, activities and programmes that are economically, socioculturally and environmentally sustainable. This means that any segment of the tourist industry must be in the process of achieving or maintaining a balance between the environmental, social and economic aspects of its operations and ensuring that no harm or damage occurs. The linkages that are forged between these three areas should contribute to an ongoing profitable concern of benefit to all.

Sustainable tourism advocates tourism that:

- has minimal negative impacts on the land and culture of the host nation;
- generates income and employment, especially for local people;
- helps tourists to be knowledgeable about their destination and the need for conservation of the environment and having a low impact on the culture;
- helps residents to better understand other cultures in dealing with foreigners who may have different expectations and outlooks;
- helps residents to better appreciate their own environment and culture;
- encourages tourists to observe environmentally sound behaviours such as minimising energy consumption, waste, water use and the use of detergents;
- monitors the 'carrying capacity' of the land and does not crowd or overrun scenic areas and fragile ecosystems with too many tourists at any one time.

In the case of Caribbean tourism, where the economic gains are not as large as they could be, where foreign domination persists and where there is a need

BOX 10.10 Standardising the tourist industry: The Green Globe logo

Recently, extra-regional countries have been in the forefront of the international debate on sustainable development. The 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro endorsed a set of principles to ensure sustainable development, known as Agenda 21. Since then environmentally friendly organisations have been working out how to apply these principles in different areas of society and culture. Green Globe 21 is a set of standards devised specifically for the travel and tourism industry – for tourists, companies and communities involved in tourism. These standards are expected to be upheld worldwide and are meant to remedy the environmental problems that have accompanied the development of mass tourism markets. The goal is to establish conditions for sustainable tourism.

For example, building hotels and establishing tourist centres should not marginalise local people but empower them to contribute to the tourism industry and make a viable livelihood. The standards laid down by Green Globe 2 enable a company, a hotel or a lodge, for example, to be ranked in terms of energy and water consumption, waste production and disposal and how well it integrates local people into its policies and practices. Green Globe 21 addresses, among others, issues such as pollution, deforestation, land degradation and biodiversity, as well as equity and social justice.

A tourist operation such as a hotel or a tour company has to achieve a minimum level of sustainable performance before it receives the Green Globe logo without the tick (Fig. 10.5). To be fully certified (that is, to receive the logo with the tick), all of the prescribed standards must be met and an independent audit should be conducted. Companies and communities that display the Green Globe logo see it as a device for attracting those tourists who are environmentally conscious. The latter constitute an increasingly sophisticated group, who now demand not only sun, sea and sand, but also that the materials used to build a facility blend into the environment, that the timber was cut in the least exploitative manner, that the workers are being paid a fair wage and that the local people are not obstructed, for example from accessing the beach.



Fig. 10.5 The Green Globe logo

for planning involving all stakeholders, the principles of sustainable development can do much to address these issues (Box 10.10).

Challenges

Tourism in the Caribbean is facing a number of challenges:

- There is now a high degree of foreign ownership of the various stages of the tourism product in the Caribbean. For example, international hotel chains and tour companies dominate all aspects of tourism. They advertise the product, organise package deals involving air transport, ground transfers and a stay at their hotels, as well as optional tours and sightseeing. These foreign hotel chains are described as ‘vertically’ and ‘horizontally linked’ so that they are able to cash in on all aspects of the tourism product.
- Foreign dominance is increasing with the advent of ICTs in the industry – the international chains maintain interactive websites to advertise and book all aspects of a holiday. Increasingly the tourist is a sophisticated person who wants to plan and choose and pay for these aspects beforehand. This cuts out the middleman in the Caribbean and much of the profits remain in foreign hands. The ability of our airlines and local hotels to deal with e-tickets and e-registration is not yet smooth and efficient and there are hundreds of small tourism providers (family-run hotels, guest houses, local tours, restaurants) that are not e-ready.
- The environmental situation is such that large numbers of tourists are being accommodated on fragile ecosystems. There is a drive to minimise waste and to conserve energy, as well as to manage resources effectively, but there is a continual dilemma of balancing the growing tourism industry with environmental concerns.
- While the exploitative nature of the tourist industry stemmed largely from the practices of big business interests, which were mainly extra-regional in origin,

BOX 10.11 Caribbean Tourism Organization

The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) is the region's tourism development agency. It has 30 country members from across the region, including Dutch-, English-, French- and Spanish-speaking, and many private sector members. The CTO's vision is to position the Caribbean as the most desirable, year-round, warm weather destination. Its stated purpose is 'Leading Sustainable Tourism – One Sea, One Voice, One Caribbean'.

The CTO offers scholarships for Caribbean nationals in member countries through its Scholarship Foundation. It also publishes travel guides and a range of reports on tourism-related topics such as sustainable development, regional air transportation and tourism management good practice, all of which are contained in the online library on its website (www.onecaribbean.org). There is also a tourism legislation database for the use of members.

The CTO is made up of government and private sector operatives in the tourism industry across the

Caribbean. It collects and disseminates research and data on the development of the regional industry and there are chapters all over the world promoting Caribbean tourism. The achievements of the CTO are based largely on its efforts to mobilise government ministers, Caribbean leaders, tourism associations, NGOs, economists and environmentalists to convene forums such as tourism conferences where options and challenges are discussed, and to interact and negotiate with global tourism organisations and interests.

The CTO is also in an ambivalent position, just like any organisation which is Caribbean-wide, in attempting to speak for and develop policy for a number of countries which are all autonomous entities and which may or may not agree. Thus, while the CTO may show that a regional airline or one travel document would considerably boost tourism in the region, this comes up against insular fears and protective measures that continually support the status quo.

environment groups from those same countries are now contesting the adverse effects of mass tourism on the natural and social environment. The Caribbean is caught within this struggle because the nature of the tourist industry is one of heavy dependence on the extra-regional countries. The Caribbean Tourism Organization (Box 10.11) works to maximise the benefits of tourism to the Caribbean region.

◆ **Identify ONE strategy that the CTO could promote in helping small tourist businesses in the Caribbean to remain profitable.**

10.9.5 A Rationally Coordinated System of Policy Measures

The ad hoc way in which Caribbean tourism grew, and continues to grow, must be addressed by pursuing an all-embracing goal that rationalises the many policies, activities, programmes and projects planned and under way. The ideal of sustainable tourism (which is subsumed within sustainable development), if insisted upon at every level and segment of the industry's operations, would begin to have a positive impact on equity, productivity

and empowerment because it would be targeting human development rather than economic growth.

One example of this is the recent initiative that supports pro-poor tourism – policies and programmes which have been planned with the understanding that the benefits that can accrue from tourism are much greater than we once believed. However, it needs the input and cooperation of a range of stakeholders, including the poor. Tourism is a business and businesses are interested in economic growth and profitability. Pro-poor tourism advocates the bringing together of stakeholders from business, environmental and social groups to chart a way forward that is sustainable and which makes business, environmental and social sense.

To achieve gains on this scale demands planning on the part of public sector authorities, tourism providers, community groups, environmental planners, local NGOs and investors. It calls for conscious and well thought-out strategies to integrate the poor into the tourism development process in meaningful ways. It calls for a commitment beyond economic growth to ideas about sustainability, and that all should be involved for this to happen. This type of practice is based on encouraging and nurturing patterns of growth which put the poor at the centre. A few examples show what can be done:

1. Reducing imports and keeping farming families out of poverty can be achieved by buying, as Sandals Jamaica does, large amounts of cantaloupes and watermelons and other fruits and vegetables from farmers whom Sandals supported in the first place so that they could put in place the infrastructure to produce on such a scale.
2. Projects that rely on tourists as a market can be set up with help from local and community investors, businesses and small manufacturing concerns. Projects of this kind reported from around the world include:
 - constructing a bottling plant using discarded bottles that are recycled by refashioning the glass into artistic cultural forms by local craftsmen and artistes;
 - contracting local suppliers to create and make the furniture, curtains, draperies, bed linen, table napkins and other decorations for hotels;
 - providing expertise from the hotel or tourism sector to local entrepreneurs setting up small business concerns or cultural shows and exhibitions which help to expand the range of experiences for the tourist;
 - setting up training in hotel management and various aspects of the tourism industry for local citizens, allowing them flexible programmes of working in the industry while they study.

ACTIVITY 10.9

Keeping in mind your local context, its needs and challenges, suggest at least ONE pro-poor tourism strategy which may be helpful in human development.

For Caribbean countries that wish to address effectively the challenges facing the tourist industry, sustainable tourism offers an opportunity to devise a rationally coordinated system of policy measures. It can be seen as a sign of advanced development when an industry as diverse as tourism can be planned and controlled to achieve objectives such as maximum optimal participation by all, especially the poor, and without harm to the environment. Human development is increased by attention to policy measures which put sustainable tourism as the overarching framework guiding the growth and expansion of the industry.

10.10

Government policies

It is sometimes thought that legislation or other government initiatives are all that is needed to solve a problem, even when it comes to development. Certainly it is important that governments do all they can to encourage prosperity, and the regional cooperation which is at the heart of CARICOM (see Chapter 11) is a positive element in this. However, the attitudes and drive of ordinary working people, entrepreneurs and business owners are just as important.

ACTIVITY 10.10

1. Outline any recent government initiative in your country which aims to cater to the development needs of the country.
2. Critique the policy/legislation in terms of an approach to development that you favour.
3. What government policy initiatives would you like to see brought in to foster development in your country or in the Caribbean region as a whole?



Wrap Up

The factors that promote or hinder development are many and interconnected. While economic growth and productivity are important aspects of the development process, the sections above have sought to show that political ideologies, social stratification and inequalities, the institutional environment in which business is conducted and our culturally dominant ideas about what development looks like are all equally important. If these factors are taken into consideration when development is being discussed, then it is more likely that groups will not be marginalised in the process, that the environment will not be ignored and that we will be on our way to developing rationally coordinated institutional systems to provide a framework for our development efforts. If we do not put such a system in place then development will continue to be focused on a particular project or reform and the opportunity to see how it could help or hinder the wider society will not arise; the emphasis will be on getting the project off the ground.

Research TOPICS

1. Research the factors involved in development by analysing the historical, political or geographical background to what is shown by a variety of development indicators. Choose one or more of the following, or construct your own line of enquiry using statistics and analysis in a similar way.
 - Use the Gini index for selected Caribbean countries with the aim of accounting for the patterns of inequalities and the differences in the patterns by analysing the historical and political development of each country.
 - Look at the Human Development Index for one or more Caribbean countries over time and try to account for the variations or the lack of variations.
 - Gather as many tourism-related statistics as you can for your country and use them as a basis to make judgements about the linkages to different sectors of the society, pro-poor policies and sustainability practices.
2. Choose any textbook now in use in schools. Those with many illustrations may prove more useful in this exercise, for example textbooks in the social studies, history, geography, sociology, language, literature, Caribbean Studies and biology.

Conduct a gender analysis of the textbook based on the following guidelines:

- a. Do the illustrations depict males and females
 - in equal or close to equal numbers?
 - clearly, in images similar in size, position and aesthetics (e.g. colour)?
 - in a variety of roles, traditional and non-traditional?
 - in ways that are likely to engage students?
 - displaying similar levels of power, authority, passiveness, and/or control?
- b. Does the text content include
 - significant contributions made by males and females (to the family, country, professions)?
 - a wide variety of roles played by males and females, of different ages, ethnicities and socioeconomic status?

- equal use of gendered pronouns (he, she, his, her)?
- non-stereotypical and non-prejudicial terms (e.g. 'chair' rather than 'chairman' or 'flight attendant' for 'stewardess')?
- portrayal of women's lives as interesting and/or problematic (not just in terms of their roles as wives, mothers and daughters)?
- a balance of the public and private spheres (e.g. evidence of men and women combining traditional and non-traditional roles)?
- a view of gender as socially constructed (rather than as essential, binary categories which are fixed and immutable)?
- attempts to portray men's lives as a gendered group (and not as invisible, neutral beings who represent the 'standard', while women are visible to emphasise their 'difference' – e.g. the possibility of a male being fearful, sad, lonely)?
- attempts to analyse historical figures in a balanced way (e.g. Columbus not only as a heroic portrayal of hegemonic masculinity – courage, leadership – but as responsible for genocide, violence and destruction)?
- a view of gender as a performance (doing not being), evoking a range of masculinities and femininities (moving away from binary positions of motherhood/fatherhood, femininity/masculinity, women/men)?

Other than the issues listed above, do you have any other ideas about how gender stereotypes might be downplayed in textbooks?

Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Define the term 'political ideology'. (2 marks)
(b) For any ONE identified political ideology, explain TWO ways in which it influenced development in the Caribbean. (4 marks)
- 2 (a) Explain what is meant by the distribution of wealth. (2 marks)
(b) Describe TWO ways in which the distribution of wealth in a country can influence development. (4 marks)
- 3 (a) Write out in full the term abbreviated to ICT. (1 mark)
(b) Give ONE example of an ICT. (1 mark)
(c) Outline TWO ways in which ICTs can impact positively on development in the Caribbean. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) Explain what is meant by the 'productive sector'. (2 marks)
(b) Describe TWO ways in which the productive sector can increase the human development of Caribbean people. (4 marks)
- 5 (a) Identify TWO different types of tourism in the Caribbean. (2 marks)
(b) State ONE positive and ONE negative impact of tourism on development in the Caribbean. (4 marks)
- 6 (a) State TWO reasons why the indigenisation of education is important. (2 marks)
(b) Outline TWO efforts made by educational reformers to indigenise education in the Caribbean. (4 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Describe the factors that impact negatively on Caribbean development.
- 2 Explain how the Caribbean could increase its capabilities in ICTs.
- 3 Outline curriculum reforms undertaken by educational authorities in the independence era.

Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 Discuss the pros and cons of foreign direct investment in the Caribbean, giving examples from specific economic sectors.
- 2 Describe the effects of global economic conditions on Caribbean economies in the past 20 years.
- 3 'Caribbean governments are more concerned with maintaining their political power than creating the conditions necessary to increase human development.' Discuss this statement.

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11

Globalisation and Development



Globally sourced goods in a supermarket

Two forces, globalisation and regional integration (see Chapter 12), dominate the context of development in the Caribbean today. Globalisation is a process generally perceived as having its own dynamic, over which we have little control. Most of the time it is confused with the processes associated with internationalisation. In Chapter 9 we learned that for development to be truly sustainable it should take into account human development and its emphasis on equity, productivity and empowerment. In this chapter, then, we examine the context of development shaped largely by popular conceptions of globalisation. The forces of globalisation bring home very clearly to us the challenges posed to small states; if we are not vigilant about defining what development means to us, others will impose their own version.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. define globalisation;
2. identify the facilitators of globalisation;
3. present a critique of the work of organisations which attempt to facilitate globalisation;
4. state various responses to globalisation;
5. assess the ways in which globalisation impacts on development in the region.

11.1 Defining globalisation

A typical definition of globalisation is that it is the process whereby ‘flows of trade, finance and information between countries are broadened and deepened so that they function as one global market’. If trade, finance and information are being globalised, then what we will find, logically speaking, is that all countries in the world will have an increasing capability in trade, finance and information to act as partners in this ‘one global market’.

Thus, in theory, a university from Singapore could set up a campus here in the Caribbean and have the same rights and privileges as a Caribbean university. It would be as if there were no borders – what could be set up in Singapore could be set up here, and vice versa.

Globalisation is a process that has been going on for some time, and perhaps meant something different two decades ago (Box 11.1). Today, with the rapid spate of inventions and developments associated with the microchip and microelectronics, ICTs are driving the globalisation process as never before. Digital technologies, the Internet and cell phones truly operate as if the world

had no borders. Increasingly, so does employment – today many multinational companies **outsource** their production

Outsourcing is the transfer of production to a cheaper area outside the home country of the company.

to an overseas workforce in order to save costs, as in the example shown in Fig. 11.1. This is the logical meaning of globalisation – whether applied to trade, production, finance flows, information or communication – for some commodity to be equally available to all, anywhere, as if the nation-state did not exist.

When people speak of globalisation, they may use definitions and language such as ‘a world without borders’ and ‘a global village’, but they do not realise the full implications. They are speaking metaphorically. For example, today there is an explosion in the knowledge industry, with more people everywhere having access to educational materials,



Fig. 11.1 Xintang in China claims to produce 60% of the world's output of jeans

BOX 11.1

Stages of globalisation

The increasing internationalisation of the economic institutions of Europe and North America in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is heralded as the start of the first wave of globalisation. The reduction in transport costs by improvement in shipping and railways led to labour becoming more mobile, and trade fed off this reduction in the costs of production and increased output. This era came to an end at the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.

It was not until the end of the Second World War (1945) that economic institutions recovered enough to resume the process of globalisation. The work of the organisations set up in the aftermath of the war helped in this respect – the United Nations, the World Bank, the IMF and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Their combined efforts helped to stabilise currencies and increase trade and production, largely in industrialised countries. They kept a tight hold on the regulation

of international monetary flows. This period came to an end in the early 1970s when OPEC countries hiked up the price of oil, throwing economies into disarray, the Bretton Woods institutions (see §11.2.1) could no longer maintain their regulation of a fixed exchange system and the dollar declined.

Since the 1970s the world has entered a period in which there has been a gradual minimisation of controls. The idea of free trade has spread, and international capital now moves about the globe as transnational corporations (TNCs) seek to establish themselves fully. As we have seen, labour outsourcing is also a major element of globalisation today.

The revolution in communications technology has driven the increasing integration of the economies of the developed and developing worlds. The fast pace with which this internationalisation of systems has occurred has prompted much debate and discussion on the phenomenon of globalisation.

as well as cultural knowledge and that disseminated as popular culture. *But are people in different places all producing their own knowledge?* This is what globalisation of the knowledge industry would mean – more people in all parts of the world being able to produce and disseminate their own cultural knowledge. On the contrary, more and more people are subject to the American mass media and it is this cultural knowledge purveyed worldwide that is described as the ‘globalisation’ of knowledge. Even if one regarded the Internet as a neutral space where anyone can post information, the fact is that the knowledge it disseminates more often than not reflects American views and perspectives. This suggests that much of the discussion about globalisation and much of the work of international organisations linked with the globalisation process is actually about something else.

Two different processes are going on in the current global economy. One is what we have called ‘internationalisation’. This recognises the nation-state and describes the process of international relations between nation-states which is at the heart of the present programmes and policies of institutions such as the World Bank or the IMF in terms of flows of capital, finance and trade (see §11.2.1). There is no conception in the way the World Bank does its work, for example, about doing away with borders. Secondly, the work of the World Bank and

the IMF is primarily directed at developing countries. They do not conceive of all countries as equal. What they present as development options to developing countries, or the threats and conditions they impose, are unthinkable in their relationships with developed countries.

The internationalisation of flows in trade, capital and finance undoubtedly leads to the increasing integration of markets and the volume of trade between them. However, the point of globalisation is the *deepening and broadening of the linkages in the flows of trade, finance and capital to help countries operate as if borders did not exist*. So we have a confused situation. Moreover, capitalists and rich countries do not necessarily want globalisation in the strict, logical sense of the definitions they continue to use. Section 11.3, which analyses the interconnections in trade, finance and capital markets, goes into this in more detail.

ACTIVITY 11.1

Describe what you think it would be like to live in a truly globalised world, one where borders are increasingly not recognised. Try to think of two scenarios, an ideal one where all the benefits of globalisation are felt without any of its disadvantages, and a nightmare one where globalisation’s potential for economic and social disaster comes into its own. Which of these two polarities do you think is the more likely?

11.2

Facilitators of globalisation and development

There is much positive talk about globalisation, but as we have seen, if it is taken to its logical limits, it is not something that many countries or groups with special interests will find particularly desirable. A truly globalised world would be one where there is a 'level playing field' and employment, finance and technological innovation move wherever capital finds the cheapest sources of material and labour. There are already many who see this as unacceptably harsh with regard to the poor, especially but not exclusively in the developing world. It can also be dangerous to the fragile ecology of our planet, since greed and unwillingness to take care of the environment can cause sustainability to be forgotten. The facilitators of globalisation in the development context include:

- international or **multilateral institutions** such as the WTO, the IMF and the World Bank (see §11.2.1);

A **multilateral institution** or agency is one where many members from different countries can participate on an equal footing.

- TNCs (§11.2.3) and NGOs;
- international agreements such as the CARIFORUM–EU Economic Partnership Agreement (§11.2.2);
- new technologies such as ICTs and manufacturing procedures (§11.2.4);
- social, gender, economic and political ideologies (§11.2.5).

11.2.1 Multilateral Institutions

Each multilateral institution is dedicated to achieving certain goals and has devised procedures for all to follow in the pursuit of these goals. There must be agreement by all members. Prime examples of multilateral agencies are the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO (formerly GATT). All three had their genesis in the aftermath of the Second World War. They were formed by a special United Nations meeting at Bretton Woods in New Hampshire, in the US, in 1945, and are sometimes known as the 'Bretton Woods institutions'. The meeting's ambitious goal was to seek ways to ensure the economic development of all countries so that the conditions that led to the great Depression of the 1930s, and indirectly to the war that followed, would not happen again. These institutions were entrusted with managing the world system of trade and ensuring development among the world's trading partners. There was no reference to globalisation in their early mandate.

The World Trade Organization (WTO)

One of the chief facilitators of globalisation is the World Trade Organization (WTO), which oversees trade regulations with enormous power to influence development. The organisation was formed in 1995 after the demise of the GATT. Its headquarters are in Geneva (Switzerland) and it has about 160 members. It goes beyond regulating trade in goods, as the GATT did, to include services such as telecommunications and banking. It is a more modern organisation than the World Bank and the IMF and its mandate clearly speaks of globalisation, not internationalisation. Its task is 'to remove all barriers or encumbrances of any kind to trade anywhere in the world'. Its activities are not restricted only to the developing world.

The WTO is the only international body set up to oversee the rules of international trade and to arbitrate disputes arising from those rules. Its members make the rules and for a decision to be taken there has to be widespread agreement. The machinery set up to do this is more enlightened than that of the other two Bretton Woods institutions but there has been mounting



Fig. 11.2 A Filipino protester shouts slogans against the World Trade Organization during a rally in Manila, The Philippines, on December 13, 2005, to coincide with a WTO meeting in Hong Kong promoting a free trade pact to boost economic growth.

criticism that the democratic procedures governing decision-making have been subverted. For example, the WTO has been accused of bias in favouring TNCs and developed nations, as in the notorious bananas dispute

(Box 11.2). Richer countries such as the US, the EU and Japan are said to exert undue pressure on developing countries in the decision-making process. The countries of the developing world struggle with events like these

BOX 11.2 Free trade: the bananas impasse

In 1996 a row erupted when the US accused the EU of giving preferential rates of entry to bananas from ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) countries. This was causing hardship to Central American banana producers and companies, such as Chiquita, a US-owned company. The ensuing events were played out in the courts of the WTO but showed the powerful position of the US (which does not itself produce bananas) in swaying the rulings of the court.

The countries of the Caribbean have long relied on the preferential tariffs they were entitled to under the Lomé Convention (see Box 11.3). Caribbean bananas, with only 8 per cent of the EU market, were allowed in according to a specially created 'two-tier quota' under which Caribbean bananas paid the lower tariff, allowing them to be sold more cheaply than their competitors. When the US challenged this lower tariff on behalf of

Chiquita Brands International (a US-based TNC), which controlled half the European banana market, it did so on the basis that this special arrangement violated the principles of free trade.

It did not matter that bananas were the mainstay of small farmers in the Windward Islands and that Chiquita was a powerful company which could not possibly be experiencing hardship over this small loss of market. The matter dragged on in the WTO for a while, with the US objecting to every suggestion of the EU to ease the burdens of the Caribbean farmers. The citizens of the EU even decided that they would be willing to pay more for fair trade bananas (those produced by small farmers on their own lands) than 'standard bananas' (those produced on large plantations owned by TNCs with headquarters outside the region). The US opposed every suggestion and instituted punitive tariffs against the EU.

BOX 11.3 The Lomé Convention

This is the name given to a historic series of agreements between the countries of the then European Economic Community (EEC, now the EU) and the ex-colonies of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (the ACP countries). Lomé I came into being in 1973 and assisted the ex-colonies by ensuring aid, soft loans and preferential trade markets for traditional exports such as sugar, rum and bananas. These preferential terms of trade helped to sustain the Caribbean agricultural sector, which depended on the export of these commodities. Although the price for these commodities fell steadily on the world market, the ACP countries were guaranteed higher prices by this treaty. Caribbean farmers came to depend on these preferential rates so that little was done to improve agricultural efficiency, to diversify into promising alternative crops or to expand and intensify production. As a result, production processes were costly and inefficient and labour was expensive.

Lomé IV was signed in 1994. The EU was a very different entity from the EEC of the original agreement and now included many countries without any ties to former colonies. It was increasingly being pressured by the WTO to liberalise trade and dismantle all preferential agreements, and it has been doing this on a phased basis. Unfortunately, the Caribbean has done little to prepare itself for the inevitable day when agricultural exports are expected to face world market prices on a competitive basis without being 'propped up' by preferential rates. Later versions of the agreement between the EU and ACP promised technical assistance for countries to upgrade their economic sectors so that they become more competitive and viable, but recently the EU has abolished its trade and tariff preferences altogether, and has instituted a new trading regime known as the Economic Partnership Agreement (see §11.2.2).

every day. Powerful lobbies manipulate the WTO courts established to settle trade disputes and determine the economic future of lesser-developed countries. While the internationalisation of markets and free trade has been going on for some time now, developing countries are still asking for increased market access to developed countries' markets and the elimination of subsidies in developed countries.

A number of WTO meetings have been the target of criticism, demonstrations and encounters between protesters and the police. For example, the talks in Seattle (1999) and Cancún (2003) broke down totally as developing countries refused to accept some of the decisions. The Seattle meeting was also the site of serious disruption and a flawed police operation to disperse protesters, whose main concerns were environmental. Attempts to reach consensus have become more and more difficult. Here we can plainly see that, given a mandate of globalisation, the richer countries of the world hesitate. They are more interested in the internationalisation of trade and the negotiations governing those interactions than in implementing fair trade. The only form of 'free' trade they will sanction is one where they reap the greatest benefits. Thus, we see that large numbers of the public are aware of how the WTO has subverted its own goals and become an instrument of internationalisation, like the World Bank and the IMF.

The World Bank

Established in the aftermath of the Second World War, this institution was officially named the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). It is now more popularly known as the World Bank. Its headquarters are in Washington DC, and there are some 188 member countries. By custom, the president chosen for the Bank has always been a US national. The Bank has largely been involved in providing finance for projects to promote development. It used to have an exclusive focus on economic growth but now that emphasis has changed to poverty reduction. This is in accordance with changing definitions of development to include sustainable development such as human development (see Chapter 9).

Loans are long term and go mainly to the developing countries of the world to promote equity and productivity in education, health, agriculture and industry. In return, the Bank may make the loan conditional on improvement in some aspect of social life which goes against principles of freedom, equity and human rights. In the past the Bank has made demands such as asking

a government to begin the transition from a totalitarian state to a democratic one and insisting on safeguards to reduce corruption.

While the Bank has earned the respect of some countries, it has been severely criticised by others as a 'tool of western imperialism'. This stems from its unconditional endorsement of the internationalisation of markets through trade liberalisation policies as the path to economic development. These policies benefit the richer countries because they can more easily take advantage of the free markets of developing countries. One criticism is that imposing a regime of free market reform policies on developing countries suggests that all developing countries are alike and that it will take the same remedy to get each on the road to economic development. This is not likely to be possible in countries suffering ethnic conflict, famine and war. It is also debatable whether changes in how the market is structured can be the basis for a comprehensive development programme.

The Bank has also been accused of having a US bias. Critics suggest that the policy of consistently pushing for the liberalisation of trade and capital markets to promote imports and exports is largely to support growth and output in the US and other wealthy countries. In addition, the Bank has been extraordinarily supportive of TNCs involved in oil, gas and mining concerns, even in the face of environmental destruction. These firms (largely US-based) continue in their operations despite the fact that, as critics have pointed out, oil and gas production do not lead to a reduction in poverty.

The World Bank today is an instrument for the internationalisation of trade and services. This is a limited objective compared to that of globalisation. The Bank focuses its activities on developing countries and privileges developed countries' rights to establish firms and access the markets of those countries. As a result, it has helped to boost economic growth in some countries, but where human development is concerned, gains have been considerably less.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Another Bretton Woods institution, the IMF, works closely with the World Bank and has the same membership. Its headquarters are also in Washington DC, and by custom the president is usually European. The two organisations reinforce each other, a situation referred to as the Washington Consensus. The focus of the IMF is on fostering global monetary cooperation and ensuring financial stability worldwide. It extends loans and forms of technical assistance to expand trade and to

help countries promote exchange stability and manage their balance of payments problems. It helps them to control their debt and gives advice on the policies most likely to encourage stable exchange rates and economic growth. On a global level the IMF is responsible for overseeing the entire international monetary and financial system.

The IMF has been cast in the role of a First World ogre preying on hapless poor countries and forcing them into a downward spiral of austerity and poverty. Again part of the problem may lie in its commitment to a uniform concept of development – prescribing the same policies for all developing countries. The standard solutions that the IMF suggests are based on austerity rather than stimulus. They include the following prescriptions:

1. Keep interest rates high to stabilise the currency.
2. Devalue the currency in order to boost exports (other countries will find the lower price attractive) and this will help to decrease imports, which become more expensive.
3. Reduce government spending, especially in ‘non-productive’ sectors such as health, education and social welfare, and increase taxes.
4. Sell public and state-owned corporations, especially utility companies, to private owners as they are a drain on the public purse (privatisation).

These austerity-based measures are popularly known as ‘structural adjustment policies’ (SAPs). In each case of IMF support they had to be agreed to by the respective governments in developing countries before the IMF would render any assistance; this has caused them also to be known as ‘conditionalities’. Implementing these SAPs has resulted in widespread unemployment and increasing poverty in the countries ‘helped’ by the IMF. At the same time, the IMF as an institution has made huge profits in restructuring loans for debtor countries. The removal of subsidies on milk and other basic food items, and the laying off of workers through downsizing, hurt the poor in developing countries, particularly Africa. In addition, increasing inflation brought about by devaluation increased the prices of basic foodstuffs and other necessities, leading to increasing levels of poverty wherever these policies were implemented. Over time the SAPs developed such a negative reputation that the IMF thought it prudent to rename the same group of policies as the ‘Poverty Reduction Strategy’; this may seem somewhat ironic, considering that the major effect wherever the SAPs were introduced was to increase poverty.

Some problems with the Bretton Woods institutions include:

- Both the World Bank and the IMF were conceived more than 50 years ago.
- They are development institutions but their understanding of development has changed over time.
- They focus on lending money and giving technical advice.
- Their track record has not been encouraging. Poverty is still widespread, though they have reported significant reductions, and while trade liberalisation has opened up markets, giving an aura of modernisation, many developing countries simply cannot compete under conditions of free trade.
- These organisations were never meant to facilitate globalisation; their mandate was development. However, they have adopted a view of development through globalisation, which they have attempted to enact in developing countries. The problem is, however, that it is only internationalisation of flows that they have succeeded in establishing.

Research mini-project

Carry out some research on one country where SAPs or poverty reduction strategies were introduced in the last 10 or 15 years, either in the Caribbean or elsewhere. What effect did these policies have in the immediate aftermath of their introduction, and what is the current situation?

11.2.2 Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)

When the final Lomé Agreement (Box 11.3) came to an end in the late 1990s, a new type of preferential trade agreement was suggested by the EU. The Contonou Agreement proposed a set of reciprocal trade agreements between the EU and regional blocks of ACP countries, to be in force by 2008. The idea was that these EPAs would not only include preferential trade conditions but also cover peripheral issues such as competition, intellectual property and copyright and government procurement. However, by 2008 fewer than half of all ACP countries had signed up to an EPA. As one commentator said (Meyn, 2008), ‘If the EU wants to see EPAs implemented, it is vital that both the process and outcome are owned and supported by both sides.’ The rhetoric is that this is



Fig. 11.3 The CARIFORUM countries

so, but in practice the EU has the upper hand.

A group of Caribbean countries signed the CARIFORUM–EU Economic Partnership Agreement to an EPA with 27 European countries in 2008, with others such as Haiti joining after local ratification. Unlike many Pacific and African countries, the Caribbean was able to negotiate corporately with the EU. The 15 countries are shown on the map, Fig. 11.3. They are:

- Antigua and Barbuda
- The Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Jamaica
- St Kitts and Nevis
- St Lucia
- St Vincent and the Grenadines
- Suriname
- Trinidad and Tobago.

◆ Compare the list of CARIFORUM members with the membership of CARICOM. Which non-CARICOM countries have joined CARIFORUM?

The European Commission had this to say about the agreement (EC, 2014):

The Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and the 15 Caribbean countries is in part a free trade agreement, or FTA. And like any FTA, it opens up trade in goods between the two regions. But unlike other FTAs, the EU–Caribbean Economic Partnership Agreement goes further. In fact, it is a wide-ranging partnership putting trade at the service of development.

The EPA involves setting up joint institutions such as a Joint Council, a Trade and Development Committee and special consultative committees to oversee aspects of the EPA implementation. The EU is also investing €146 m in the region via the EPA. Table 11.1 shows the ways in which EU investment will be spent.

ACTIVITY 11.2

5. Read the quotation above from the European Commission on the CARIFORUM–EU EPA. If possible access the whole report (<http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/caribbean/>), or the PDF document giving details of the EPA. What bias can you detect? Is this document to be taken at face value, or do we need to be wary of the claims it makes?
6. Look carefully at Table 11.1. What do you think of the priorities the EU has given to the various investments in the CARIFORUM–EU agreement?

11.2.3 Transnational Corporations (TNCs)

Some of the largest **transnational corporations** (TNCs) in the world include the household names of BP,

TNCs are large firms (also called multinational companies) which operate as internationally integrated production systems, often outsourcing both materials and labour.

Exxon, AT&T, Coca-Cola, Dell, Google, Halliburton, Honda, IBM, McDonald's, Microsoft, Nestlé, Nike and Gap. They are dependent on the principle of free trade for their existence.

These multinational companies are some of the largest players in the internationalised world economy. The top 500 US corporations make about 60 per cent of its GDP. The combined income of Ford and General Motors, for example, exceeds that of many nation-states, and it is not alone in this.

Table 11.1 EU investment spending

Programme	Implementing Bodies	Total €m
Implementing the EPA Helping states to implement the agreement	Caribbean Export; Caribbean Development Bank; Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture; International Monetary Fund; West Indies Rum and Spirits Producers' Association; Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt	46.5
Helping Caribbean businesses use the EPA	Caribbean Export	28.3
Consolidating the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME)	CARICOM Secretariat	27.5
Fostering cooperation between Haiti and the Dominican Republic	Haiti-DR Binational Commission	22.5
Promoting integration between Eastern Caribbean states	Secretariat of the OECS	8.6
Human capital investment and cooperation with other Caribbean states	tbc	13.3

Source: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/april/tradoc_149286.pdf, p.6, accessed 22 April 2014

More than half of all TNCs are owned by just five nations: France, Germany, the Netherlands, Japan and the US. While their headquarters may be in Europe, Japan or the US, their factories may be at several sites in developing countries. For example, they may be involved in primary production in one country where the resources are – say forestry in Guyana – and they may send the cut lumber to another developing country for manufacture into a range of products. Their reasons have to do with what is best for the firm – it may be that this country has a very stable government or currency situation or that its infrastructure is sound or that its labour force is cheap (for example, Costa Rica, India, the Philippines). While they represent a large amount of FDI which developing countries need, they generate minimal employment, being highly modernised, capital-intensive firms.

Research mini-project

Choose one of the TNCs named at the start of this section, OR a TNC with headquarters or an outsourced production facility in your country. Find out the following:

- a origins of the TNC;
- b where its headquarters are;
- c what its annual turnover is;
- d to which countries it outsources production;
- e where its main markets are;
- f what its reputation is for fair dealing with its suppliers and workers.

Despite persistent criticisms from developing countries about the practices of TNCs, their home governments have not tried to regulate their operations effectively. This is what free trade is about – the removal of restrictions. In fact, the TNCs receive a great deal of support from their home governments and multilateral organisations because they are the ultimate triumph of free trade and the unencumbered movement of capital, finance and investment across borders.

Whatever their practices, developing countries tend to welcome the FDI brought by TNCs and offer them incentives (such as tax holidays and reduced environmental checks) to establish branches. The TNCs use the low-cost labour of developing countries to produce a competitively priced product (see the case study of India in Box 11.4). They can leave any time they choose and they do not employ enough persons for there to be a solid justification for their presence. Some TNCs have been guilty of extremely serious human rights violations and other crimes in poor countries, while adhering to regulations in their home countries. Shell, Nike and Gap have been accused of exploiting workers. Other TNCs have been found guilty of tax evasion, money laundering and hiding funds in offshore banks. There has also been some speculation that the TNCs play a political role in that they pursue the interests of developed countries at the far reaches of the globe. Moreover, the world decision-making bodies for development, monetary strategies and trade regulations are controlled by developed countries, which often act in favour of the TNCs.

BOX 11.4**Case study: TNCs in Hyderabad**

India is a good example of the effect on ordinary workers of globalised industries outsourcing work to the developing world. Read this analysis by the scholar Immanuel Ness of the situation in Hyderabad.

India's high technology boom exemplifies a pattern of new industry replacing old stable communities by introducing new technology and securing low-wage labor. To undermine the power of labor unions, the government assists businesses in closing older factories that once provided living wages and in opening new enterprises that receive financial, technical, and logistical support from the state, while paying workers lower wages and repressing labor unions. A consensus among political economists in India is that new installations do not pay competitive wages and thus undermine the economic stability of entire communities. Thus, while the 'outside world' (aka free market economists in the Global North) views India as a first-rate model for economic development, only

a small segment – the nation's capitalist class – profits from these technological advances. ...

The informal sector marginalizes workers into jobs with little prospect of earning enough to survive. In Hyderabad, many construction workers are displaced by former peasants who live in the city's slums. While cities grow more prosperous for those employed in the IT and business services sectors, workers and peasant farmers in the countryside are displaced and left without adequate housing, education, and public services. Contractors frequently hire these same displaced laborers to build and maintain the new high technology centers on formerly agricultural land expropriated by Indian technology firms. ... Upon completion of their work, most workers must move on to new construction sites, continuing the process of dispossession and labor exploitation.

Source: Ness (in preparation).

ACTIVITY 11.3

Read the case study in Box 11.4 and answer the questions below.

1. Explain why the author sees high-tech industries as a destabilising factor socially.
2. What parallels can you identify with situations we are experiencing currently in the Caribbean?

11.2.4 Technology

A globalised world is one where everybody can benefit from the trade in technology. Take the example of cell phones (see Box 11.5). From the nomadic peoples of the Sahara to Caribbean people in shanty towns to fishermen in Asia going about their trade, almost everyone uses cell phones to communicate. This is an example of something that has been truly globalised and gives us a good understanding about globalisation as a process. It is not that those groups of people are necessarily communicating globally, but that the use of cell phones is a global phenomenon touching all income groups.

The advances made in ICTs, as described in Box 11.5, facilitate the way in which globalisation has been able to go a long way in levelling the playing field for many where communication is concerned. However, this has

necessitated changes in the way companies operate, so one may question the extent to which capitalist organisations can tolerate a truly global world. For example, the old monopolies of the telecommunications authorities have had to be dismantled and are no longer as profitable as before. Computers, too, are less expensive and more accessible to more income groups. All this is pointing to a dilemma for capitalist ventures – the technologies are now being mass-produced and more people can afford them; where is the money to be made?

The process of globalisation is not fully understood, but the situation described above encourages us to speculate about how the process will proceed. If an increasing number of people use cell phones and other companies copy and create features which may be similar to those of one particular make, what will happen next? Certainly, inventiveness is going to continue and increasingly sophisticated features will be designed, becoming more expensive. Already, digital technology allows us to show the photographs we have taken with the cell phone on the computer, to make videos with our phones and to search the Internet as well. The point is that, among all today's happy cell phone users, there are many who will be left behind in a new kind of digital divide – not only will the gadgets be priced out of their reach but they will also be hard-pressed to understand all the applications and

BOX 11.5**Cell phones and globalisation**

The fast pace of the internationalisation of communications systems, trading relationships and flows of finance and capital across the globe has been facilitated in recent times by ICTs. These technologies allow people to communicate in 'real time' – there are no delays. Cell phone technology, email and 'chat rooms' allow instant communication anywhere in the world. Business and industry have been quick to see the advantages of incorporating these modern communications technologies into their operations. They not only enable businesses to communicate with suppliers and customers in a timely way; computer technologies have also now become an indispensable part of actual production. Whether it is the bottling of soft drinks, the manufacture of furniture or retailing, key areas of operations are computerised. Companies of all kinds have seen the need to incorporate these technologies into their businesses.

In the World Bank's Report on Development in the Caribbean (World Bank, 2005, p 137), the example is given of a small group of businesses, known as Unique Jamaica, which was able to put ICTs to work for them in novel ways. This group of small hoteliers and tour operators needed to boost their productivity. They first revised their vision, basing it on attracting those interested in adventure and nature tourism. They then designed tour packages around the themes of nature, culture and culinary arts. ICTs were incorporated into their marketing campaign because this was the most cost-effective way to launch their plans and advertise their business. In addition, an interactive web-based booking engine helped them to generate business.

However, businesses and industries which are slow to modify their operations or have inadequate infrastructure cannot take advantage of the savings and efficiencies to be made from the global technology sector, and will not be competitive. For example, as the same report states (World Bank, 2005, p 136), the Caribbean has been a disappointment to companies of the developed world and even to regional companies seeking to outsource certain low-end areas of their operations. One area where this has been evident in several Caribbean countries is in the setting up of telemarketing call centres, which rely on low costs of connectivity to be competitive. In both Antigua and Jamaica investment in setting up these centres did not pay off for a variety of reasons, but mainly because of antiquated rules and regulations governing telecommunications, poor technological and communication infrastructure and inadequate skills.

However, this may not necessarily continue. The giant state-owned telephone companies in the region, as well as those which service more than one country, enjoyed a virtual monopoly in the services they provided for decades. The fact that ordinary citizens are very aware of prices charged globally for the same services, about high-speed internet connections and that international call centres are cheaper, means that they are making demands on the old monopolies, which also have to accommodate to the idea of new providers coming into the region. They have had to look at their operations in a critical light to see what services they can offer and what pricing they can use to neutralise the threats emanating largely from new technologies which enable competitors to set up business.

possibilities of the new technologies. A combination of natural creativity and the demands of capitalism will bring about a situation where the playing field will be upset. We are now seeing the giant companies such as Samsung and Apple bringing out cutting-edge cell phone models every year priced out of range for the average consumer. Does this mean that globalisation will have received a setback? We do not know; it is a process largely in the making.

ACTIVITY 11.4

How do you expect cell phone technologies to change in the next five years? How will those changes bring about different kinds of relationships between cell phone users, the telecommunications providers and other citizens?

11.2.5 Ideologies

In this section we look at a number of **ideologies** which have adherents in a number of countries.

An **ideology** is a set of ideas, doctrines or beliefs which forms the basis about how someone or a group thinks of the political, economic, religious or some other system. These ideologies foster globalisation by linking people across national and regional boundaries.

Social ideology

One social ideology is 'the equality of all people'. This comes in a number of different forms. Equality of opportunity, for example, would eliminate discrimination which is based on age, gender, colour, race, national origin, religion or physical and mental disabilities. When

such an ideology becomes a global one, which many countries share, this paves the way for the interpenetration of ideas between them and the breaking down of boundaries between nations. Note the similarities of youth culture in the Caribbean and the United States and Europe. Countries that do not share the same social ideologies are often marginalised, whatever their political position, as for example with Iran or North Korea.

Gender ideology

Gender ideologies focus on the identity, freedom and opportunities of women. The feminist movement, sometimes known as women's liberation, has spread across the world and developed these ideas so that they are known globally, in almost every country. In this sense gender ideology is a facilitator of globalisation. However, some Islamic countries such as Iran and Pakistan discourage the spread of this ideology because it is seen as conflicting with the religious foundation of those countries. You will learn more about gender ideology in Chapter 14.

Economic ideology

The present internationalisation of world systems of trade in goods and services, flows of capital and finance and information is based on an *ideology of free trade* and open markets. This theory of trade was first advocated by Adam Smith in the eighteenth century as a reaction to mercantilism. It basically said that, once governments no longer intervened in the terms of trade, each country could specialise in the commodities which it could produce especially well (in which it had a *comparative advantage*). Productivity would then increase, leading to exports.

This may sound simple but what it is saying is that the market is the sole engine of growth. It is the market that we should allow to balance needs, supply and demand. Some people feel that this is a dangerous path to take as the question arises: whose markets will be the important markets? This policy of free trade which is being employed to internationalise world trade has certain impacts:

- **Labour.** Trade both creates and destroys jobs. The focus on increasing trade among countries needs to differentiate the effects of increasing imports and increasing exports. If exports are increased, then it is likely that this is based on jobs in the country which produces these exports. However, when there are increases in imports this usually means that those items which could have been made locally are not. Jobs, then, are lost when a society imports more and more of its needs and wants. There is nothing in the market to put a halt to these imports. Some regulatory

mechanism has to be set up to prevent uncontrolled imports. Other countries with more competitive advantages will flood the markets of developing countries with cheap goods (for example, China today is able to flood both the developed and developing world with mass-produced goods). The result of these processes is a balance of payments problem and a loss of jobs in the importing countries.

- **Balance of trade.** Disguised and open **protectionist**

Protectionist policies use tariffs and customs duties to protect local goods from the competition they face from cheaper imports.

policies are still very much in place in Europe and North America, showing that they recognise that free trade cannot be implemented without any barriers whatsoever. These regions still retain protectionist measures for those products where they are fearful that developing countries hold an advantage (textiles, artistic creations, canned and bottled foods). Heavy subsidies to farmers in Europe (the infamous Common Agricultural Policy) make it that much more difficult for developing countries to export to these markets. Additionally, the aid that they offer is much less than the subsidies they pour into their own economies. Free trade, although advocated as the means to globalise economies and societies, is not being practised. What is happening in reality is that different rules seem to apply to different countries. The present organisation of trade relations is skewed so that poorer countries act as markets for the products of the developed world.

- **Market integration.** Even with the uneven situation regarding protectionism, the markets of developing and developed countries have become increasingly integrated; the volume of trade in goods and services between them has greatly increased in the past few decades. The claim is sometimes made that the more 'open' an economy is to goods and services or financial and capital flows, the more likely it is that economic growth will be promoted. This is disputed by many.
- **Flows of capital.** Capital can be moved quickly to anywhere in the world, facilitated by the revolution in ICTs. FDI is easier now in developing countries because of the liberalisation of regulations governing the international movement of capital. However, there is no similar move to mobilise labour across borders; there are continued tight restrictions on immigration in most countries. In fact, developed countries have preferences for highly skilled and professional labour and have drained developing countries of some of their most educated talent. Clearly, selective immigration is being encouraged rather than freedom of movement.

- **The dominance of transnational corporations (TNCs).** As we saw earlier (§11.2.3), TNCs are part of the economic ideology of the free market and free trade. Outsourcing only works where there is a free flow of capital and goods across borders, and where companies can easily set up factories and employ labour outside their home country.

Political ideologies

Political ideologies work in favour of globalisation mainly where neoliberal economic policies are part and parcel of them. The ideology of the market with its capitalist overtones pervades much of the political ideology of the American-led western democracies, and this is often exported along with the neoliberal policies themselves (see Box 11.7, page 281). However, democracy is not the only ideology.

Liberalism

We discussed the phenomenon of trade liberalisation and its effects in Chapter 8. Trade liberalisation is part of a political/economic ideology known as neoliberalism, in which ‘the market’ is seen as the best way of regulating economic affairs. Liberalism also affects social policies in encouraging tolerance of non-traditional religious and moral views. Most feminists, for example, take a liberal position on such policies. Liberal ideas and pressure groups have been behind legislative changes that decriminalise homosexuality, take steps towards equality for women in the workplace and outlaw domestic rape. In some countries there are political parties using the name ‘liberal’ – for example, one of the main parties in Australia is the Liberal Party.

Democracy

The powerful western countries, with their high development rankings, also hold democratic forms of government as a type of ideology. This is especially true of the United States, whose efforts to export parliamentary democracy to other countries has informed the country’s foreign policy for a number of decades. In many cases, financial help from the IMF or the World Bank was given on condition that political reforms were undertaken in the recipient country, including moves towards democracy. Western support for the rebels of the so-called Arab Spring, a wave of popular protests in the Middle East seeking to oust a variety of tyrants and juntas and improve governance, was predicated on the protesters’ desire to set up democratic government. The fact that the Arab Spring has not blossomed into a democratic summer has not deterred the US and its allies from continuing to champion democracy in as many countries as possible, even in places where there is no democratic tradition or commitment to the rule of law.

- ◆ **Can you identify any Caribbean countries where you judge that the democratic tradition is not strong enough to support a stable parliamentary democracy?**

Another way in which the word ‘democratic’ has been used politically is as a euphemism for communism. In Eastern Europe the communist regimes set up after the Second World War, which lasted until 1989, were officially known as democratic republics, much as the Democratic Republic of Congo is today, and with as little in common with the type of democracy we would recognise in the Caribbean.

Conservatism

Conservatism is the ‘umbrella’ name given to any political ideology which seems to preserve traditional norms or aspects of the social fabric against the prevailing ideology of liberalism. The two are not always opposed, as the term ‘liberal conservatism’ – which essentially tries to combine the best of both ideologies – indicates. Some political parties are founded on the principle of conservatism, especially in Europe, such as, for example, the Conservative Party in the UK, which is often referred to by its detractors as the Tory Party. The Conservative Party is a broad coalition of different types of conservative, and there are frequently deep divisions within it on policy. As well as liberal conservatives, there are also social conservatives who have formed political parties in Europe (where they are often known as Christian Democrats) and elsewhere. In the United States social conservatives might belong to either the Republicans or the Democrats, both of which have their conservative elements.

Socialism and communism

Socialism was originally postulated by Marx as a stage on the way to the communist state (see Chapter 14). The communist republics of the post-war period in Europe were often known as socialist regimes, but a number of more or less left-wing political parties in western Europe have also used the name, sometimes combined with ‘democrat’, as in the Social Democratic Party of Germany.

Caribbean socialism has usually come closer to the Marxist ideal, as in the Castro regime in Cuba, Maurice Bishop’s short-lived coup in Grenada or the socialist republic of Guyana which was destroyed by US and British intervention (see Chapter 14). But the Jamaican Labour Party follows non-Marxist socialist principles in its historical links with the trade unions, although it is today fairly conservative in outlook socially.

'Green' politics: ecology as ideology

Green politics is a relatively new type of ideology. The Green Movement arose in the 1980s from the frustration of environmentalists at the slow pace of change towards an understanding of ecology and its importance. NGOs and lobbying/activist organisations such as Greenpeace led the way (see Box 11.6), followed by the arrival of Green parties in Europe and elsewhere. Their strongest political support is in the democracies of Europe, where there is a Federation of Green Parties, and member parties regularly win seats in national and regional assemblies.

BOX 11.6 Environmental NGOs

The umbrella description 'environmental NGOs' is a broad designation covering a number of different national and international organisations sharing a focus on the environment and on environmental protection. Perhaps the most famous international NGO under this umbrella is Greenpeace, which has for more than 40 years been a thorn in the side of governments with regard to threats to the environment. Greenpeace is a campaigning group, using specially commissioned reports, letters, advertising, lobbying, diplomacy and most famously direct non-violent action to get its message across. The first piece of action involved a small boat containing Greenpeace activists and journalists visiting Amchitka, north of Alaska, in 1971, where they drew attention to secret US underground nuclear tests. Activists have been arrested on a number of occasions and sometimes imprisoned.

The other well-known environmental organisation is Friends of the Earth, which has some branches in the Caribbean, for example in Grenada and the Bahamas. There are also a number of other environmental NGOs in the Caribbean. Several Caribbean countries have a National Trust, for example, which exists to protect the natural environment, often by establishing and maintaining national parks. Many of these are charitable organisations, such as the Bermuda National Trust or the National Trust for the Cayman Islands, but some National Trusts, for example the Anguilla National Trust, are government agencies rather than NGOs.

11.3

Impact and response to globalisation

It is clear that globalisation as a process is eroding distinctions between one place and another. This is mostly seen in relationships governing trade, finance, information and digital technologies. It seems to be removing the advantages which some groups once enjoyed (for example, the national or regional telephone companies) and levelling the playing field for others. We have also seen different responses. The large companies have had to rethink their operations in order to continue to make profits amidst competition. For example, cell phone companies are spurred by their own success to make more complex products.

11.3.1 Impacts of the Globalisation Processes

A number of impacts have been noted:

- **The expansion of free trade.** The expansion of free trade is also known as trade liberalisation. As we have seen, it requires that countries reduce or remove the tariffs they have placed on imports to protect their own industries. This is extremely problematic because if one country removes tariffs but other countries can produce the goods more cheaply, then the likelihood is that the first country's market will be flooded by the cheaper foreign products and it will not be able to sell its own products. And a country ignoring the call to lift trade restrictions will be left behind because others would be participating in larger and larger free trade areas.
- **Measures to tighten efficiency.** These measures are instituted to increase output and reduce the costs of production where necessary. This often means the mechanisation or automation of some processes in agriculture and industry and the laying off of workers. Countries wishing to dismantle their own tariff and other barriers, so that they may have equal access to other countries' markets which have also been liberalised, need to put these measures in place so that they can become more competitive. Trade liberalisation cannot be of advantage to a country if its production costs are high.
- **Exploitation of workforces in developing countries through outsourcing.** The employment of workers where labour is much cheaper than in a TNC's home country can lead to the exploitation of those workers through unfair contracts, temporary and seasonal employment, low wages and poor working conditions. The outsourcing of labour may also affect the employment situation in the home country.

- **The persistence of tariffs.** In developed countries in particular some tariffs persist, and these countries often resort to subsidising the costs of production of selected products so that they will be competitive. This is an issue about ‘having your cake and eating it too’ – being able to flood the markets of lower-income countries, most of whom have complied and removed tariffs, but maintaining your own so they cannot flood your markets.
- **Homogenisation of institutions.** Multilateral organisations such as the World Bank and the IMF lend money to assist in the internationalisation of markets as a key factor in development. These organisations persuade and coerce individual governments to accept their advice relating to trade, finance and capital flows as measures to increase their productivity and competitiveness. As a result, the development processes recommended by these institutions are remarkably similar across countries. Their prescriptions have had a homogenising influence on the development of institutions dealing with trade, industry, banking and governance in each country – for example, structural adjustment policies or SAPs (see §11.2.1) which encourage cutting back on social reforms, reducing the workforce and reducing salaries.

11.3.2 The Context of Development

The pressure towards the internationalisation of economic systems and the global reach of ICTs is transforming the context of development for Caribbean countries. Increasingly our supermarkets and department stores exhibit a wide range of goods from all parts of the world. They increase choice for the consumer, who benefits by choosing cheaper products which may not be locally produced. However, these imports have to be paid for with foreign exchange which we would normally derive from our exports. But exports have reduced significantly, due to the following factors:

- the removal of trade preferences (especially the case for the banana farmers of the Windward Islands);
- the underselling of local products by cheaper foreign goods and services (for example, furniture, canned and bottled food and drink, airline and travel options);
- the employment of workers in developing countries whose legislation does not give any protection for the workforce against exploitation, unfair dismissal and other negative practices;
- the closure of both large and small firms which cannot compete with the technological efficiencies of foreign competitors (for example, car assembly plants, garment manufacture and sugar cane processing).

BOX 11.7

Globalisation as an ideology

People tend to have strong views about globalisation, even when they do not understand it. They may feel that it is inevitable and brings about modernisation and development. If they commit to such views, even in the face of evidence to the contrary, then this is an example of casting globalisation as an ideology.

To have an ideological position on globalisation means that there will be support for another ideology – free trade. A free market is thought to be the mechanism which can ensure development and progress for everyone. If people were able to exchange goods and services freely and choose freely what goods and services they want to produce then there would be benefits for all. This was Adam Smith’s justification for free trade (§11.2.5). This system of beliefs is therefore saying that if there is any intervention in the market by the state then the rate of economic growth and prosperity will slow down. Such ideas have formed the major assumptions of some schools of thought

in economic theory, mainly neoliberal economics. Basically these theorists say that for development to occur based on increased output, restrictions on capital must be removed, as must laws that restrict employers, investors and TNCs. An unfettered market is the engine of growth.

However, these ideas have been repeatedly criticised. They are too simplistic in that they ignore the issue of context, because what works in one country may not do so in another with different historical and cultural traditions. There has also been a wealth of empirical evidence attesting to the failure of economic policies based on these premises from all over the developing world. That the proponents of free trade are still calling for it in the simple, non-problematic way that suppresses differences between countries underscores its ideological nature. For those who equate globalisation with the economic policies of free trade, globalisation is an ideology.

ACTIVITY 11.5

To what extent is trade liberalisation a reality in your country? In answering this question you may need to tap into the memories and experiences of older persons. Ask several people about access to goods and services today compared to 10 or 15 years ago.

This means that the context of development for Caribbean countries as a result of free trade practices is one of spiralling debt and decreasing productivity and output. Reliance on free trade ideologies is leading to unbalanced development (Box 11.7). Development efforts have to look for creative ways of penetrating this world market by establishing a demand for niche products and countering some of the negative effects which the developed countries seem to be inflicting on small, vulnerable economies, perhaps by deepening the regional integration movement.

11.3.3 Responses to Globalisation

As we have seen, globalisation is a set of circumstances which have come together to enable countries to function as if there were no national borders. Globalisation is actively being pursued by world bodies which believe that it can be facilitated by free trade and a free market system. But many nation-states see these policies of internationalisation of trade, capital finance and information as a threat to their autonomy and identity. The latter is the second force – a nativist response by nation-states, or even ethnic groups. Not only is it difficult for nation-states to monitor and regulate e-commerce for tax purposes and to control piracy of music and other forms of intellectual property from the Internet, or even the availability of pornography, but the autonomy of nations is also threatened under a free market economy by larger and more efficient producers. The terms of trade and regulations governing trade are monitored by the WTO and are often skewed against small, vulnerable economies. Thus, small states in particular feel a need to come together in some way to fight their absorption and the loss of their identity.

Under systems of increasing internationalisation nation-states have found it advantageous to integrate some part of their operations so that they can better deal with the threat posed by the free market ideology. In the Caribbean we tried a bold move for political integration on the federation model, which was not successful. We then began anew, with more modest goals, to establish a free trade area in the form of CARIFTA (the Caribbean Free Trade Association). This policy was aimed at using

the free market idea to reap benefits through functional cooperation across states and thus to minimise the difficulties of being a small producer. Within the free trade area members could therefore trade with the minimum of taxes and tariffs. This limited amount of cooperation led Caribbean countries to seek deeper association, especially as the free market, as a strategy for development, was endorsed by world bodies. CARICOM thus came into being (see Chapter 12).

The even deeper linkages involved in adopting the CSME suggest that the Caribbean region is using integration as a form of defence to ward off the negative impacts of free trade with the wider world. Globalisation, then, is driving the Caribbean to form associations of all kinds and deepen integration ties within CARICOM so that it can be stronger economically and thus be able to interact with the more powerful players on the world stage with some advantages.

Development options for the Caribbean

The failure of neoliberal economic theory (Box 11.7) to bring about credible development (and therefore the failure of free trade and economic globalisation, which were ideologies pushed on to developing countries) is forcing Caribbean thinkers, economists and policymakers to find another solution to the issue of development. This is extremely difficult because the Caribbean cannot withdraw from the present system of international trade.

Our previous strategy was to focus on import substitution – where foreign firms came in, imported parts and inputs from abroad and established assembly-type industries in the Caribbean. It avoided the need to have local investment capital, or to find markets or expertise, as these firms were already well placed. They provided employment and were supposed to build a capability in labour so that later local industries could be established to increase our growth and output. This policy had limited success. Today we have to look for another strategy.

What are our options?

- To put human development at the core of any development strategy. Emphasis on the market marginalised the poor and other groups and what we need are more empowering strategies.
- The masses of our people are poor. They have been traditionally excluded from widespread participation in the social institutions of the land. We can consciously incorporate them by seeking equity in health, education, land distribution, employment and

BOX 11.8**Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA)**

The Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA) was formed in 1985 in Barbados. It was pan-Caribbean in conception because it recognised the importance of a collective organisation, regional co-operation and networking in pushing forward a programme of women's activism. Disparate feminist groups in various Caribbean countries were working towards the same goals and so it made sense to unite under an umbrella organisation.

CAFRA sees women's activism as the major avenue through which equal opportunities can be established for women and it consistently defends women's political, social and economic rights. This is because, despite strides in equalising opportunities for women throughout the twentieth century, there is still much evidence that in the Caribbean many women continue to live in poverty, are discriminated against on the labour market and do not have much in the way of support networks. CAFRA is then a movement for social justice through the power of collective action on the part of women.

The members of CAFRA are for the most part feminists and they are involved in feminist politics which commits to raising the level of consciousness in the society about women's issues and taking action to improve the situation. The movement is also involved in research striving to understand the connections and wider dimensions of the

oppression of women such as the linkages between all forms of oppression in the society. One insight that emerges from their work is that 'women' are not a homogeneous grouping and that to fight for women's just place in society one must also consider that women are socially located into different groups based on social class, colour and ethnicity, and their needs may differ. Further, that there are power differentials among women themselves, adding a hitherto hidden dimension to CAFRA's mission (which originally focused on dismantling the power hierarchies between men and women in society). Ultimately, the work of CAFRA is aimed at not only improving the well-being and status of women in society but to laying a foundation for transformation in the relations between women and men in the society.

The effects of recent economic crises and the continuing effects of globalisation on vulnerable groups, particularly women, is a key area where CAFRA believes it can help in the development process. Their programmes have included activism for women in agriculture, development and sustainable livelihoods, and women's health and reproductive rights. However, much of their work is directed at the insecurity and violence in society that is borne to a great extent by women. To do that CAFRA members have to mobilise beyond their own organisation and form partnerships with social workers, the justice system, schools and workplaces.

training. In other words, we need the political will to do so.

- To intensify regional integration along principles which promote the good of Caribbean people. It would be a contentious issue, as trade and tariff issues would arise and we would be likely to incur the wrath of the WTO, the IMF, the World Bank and the TNCs. In other words, we might experience the withdrawal of aid, tariff restrictions and the closure of markets for our products.

The option taken has to be a path we consciously choose, given our context as small, developing countries enmeshed in an historical association with the superpowers. The other models that we have been pursuing are context-free. But we cannot escape context, and thus the issue of regional integration must be factored in as an option which we can actively tap to set us on a better path to development.

Popular movements

A number of popular movements have grown up in response to globalisation, particularly where globalisation was perceived to be negative in its effects. Some of these movements have become UN-recognised NGOs. As well as the Caribbean-based Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA), described in Box 11.8, there are other more globally focused movements such as the Women's Action for New Directions (WAND), described in Box 11.9. There are also more generally a number of environmental and social justice NGOs (Boxes 11.6 and 11.10).

◆ **Search the Directory of Caribbean Environmental Organisations and Environmental Government Agencies (www.earthdirectory.net/caribbean#organisations) for the names of relevant NGOs in your country.**

BOX 11.9**Women's Action for New Directions (WAND)**

First established in the Caribbean in 1978, this group saw as their mission the empowerment of women, especially those living in rural areas. Their focus was on promoting rural development through women's development and women's development through rural development. Their efforts centred on the community which they saw as the means to effect social transformation. In terms of development thinking, their position was that any form of development planning must be informed by the experiences, knowledge and reflections of community members. If their input is not included then development is not likely to bring about meaningful change.

Their ideological framework is based on a mission of self-transformation, attempting to change or influence women's thinking by helping them to become more aware of their social location. They therefore seek to educate women about the capitalist structures in which they are embedded and which result in social injustice and inequality. This is an emancipatory framework and therefore has to be participative.

Women formed groups to address issues related to domestic violence, effective parenting, reproductive health, HIV and AIDS, mobilising the community for action, conflict resolution, and building self-esteem and self-confidence. WAND helped communities by building pre-schools and set up self-employment projects as well as workshops in business management. It also established small, interest-free revolving loan schemes.

Some of its projects took place at Fancy and

Rose Hall, St Vincent, and La Pointe in St Lucia. Participation in these programmes helped to give women a voice in the community and honed their advocacy skills so that they could speak for themselves. This is an important aim because to a large extent poor rural women are on the periphery of mainstream capitalist ideas of development. WAND's projects help them to understand their rights as human beings and as women and the need to take control of their lives. The income-generating projects increase their means of becoming self-reliant within a socioeconomic system which marginalises them.

WAND's institutional context is the UWI and it therefore has an academic side. It has developed a specialised women's reference library on women, gender and development and related gender issues. A well-defined research agenda grew out of its many community-based projects, so that theorising on social issues such as poverty comes directly from an analysis of its projects in rural areas. WAND also partners with other bodies such as CARIFORUM to educate women about how the CSME will affect them in terms of barriers and opportunities.

The ideas of development which have been experienced in the Caribbean have often been neutral on gender. Organisations such as WAND seek to show that development cannot be successful if the reality of women's lives, particularly rural women, is left out of development planning.

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SUMMARY

This section analysed the impact of the processes and procedures that are internationalising the flows of trade, finance, capital and other commodities between different countries, and which are loosely referred to as 'globalisation'. We found that, as well as the emphasis on the economic dimensions, the process whereby markets become internationalised impacts on (and is sometimes determined by) the social, cultural and political responses in a country. We also saw that the failures associated with some of the development recommendations made by the

Bretton Woods institutions have influenced developing countries to rethink their own paths to development. We need to remember that the process of internationalisation is taking place between actors on an unequal footing – superpowers, TNCs, industrialised countries, developing countries and very poor countries. There is no 'super-government' to administer the process and it is largely a situation whereby the richer countries seem to profit far more than others.

BOX 11.10 Social justice NGOs: the CPDC

The Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC) was formed in 1991 as a coalition of social justice NGOs in the Caribbean, forming a think tank and advocacy centre. The CPDC mandate is to impact on social policies across the region by defining development alternatives and by empowering member NGOs in their work. Its origins were in the Caribbean Conference of Churches, in whose offices it operated for some time. It achieved joint consultative status within CARICOM in order to represent NGOs of the region in that organisation.

Other activities include:

- Commissioning research to show the negative impact felt by people in the region as a result of SAPs.
- Advocating for the writing-off of debt for the poorest countries, where debt repayments are crippling any possibility of development or future prosperity.
- Campaigning on behalf of the poor with respect to trade liberalisation.
- Encouraging awareness of environmental impacts and the advisability of sustainable development as a project.
- Hosting a variety of conferences and consultations. For example, in June 2011 CPDC held a major civil society consultation to discuss issues before the upcoming Commonwealth People's Forum held in Australia in October of that year.
- Monitoring funding for NGO programmes in the current donor climate, where foreign aid has been cut back by a number of extra-regional governments.
- Fostering capacity building within regional NGOs, including improvement in management techniques, efficiency and budgeting, project design, evaluation of programme priorities, local participation, and so on.
- Encouraging civil society to work towards better governance and sounder forms of democracy.

**Wrap Up**

The Caribbean has been involved in a system of internationalisation of trade, finance, capital, labour and information flows which has increasingly integrated its economies and societies with those of developed countries. There is some dispute as to whether this incomplete internationalising of systems can be called 'globalisation', which logically refers to the integration of markets and other aspects of social life as if the nation-state did not exist. The Internet is possibly the best example of globalisation. However, the multilateral institutions which assist in development projects in the developing world have embraced the ideology of free trade as the road to development through globalisation. This has had mixed results, as globalisation is itself not fully understood and developed countries use unfair trade practices in their interactions with developing countries. The impacts on those developing countries, including those within the Caribbean region, have frequently been significant. Their responses have included popular movements and NGOs which campaign for a different approach to development.

Research TOPICS

1. Examine as a case study one tertiary learning organisation in your country. Identify what aspects of it are influenced by globalisation.
2. Download from the Internet or consult in a library the latest report from the Caribbean Development Bank. Identify an important issue for debate, and construct a motion for debate. Then prepare notes for two speeches, one for the motion, the other against.

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Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Define the term 'globalisation'. (2 marks)
 (b) Explain TWO processes by which globalisation happens. (4 marks)
- 2 (a) Identify TWO responses to globalisation, one in the distributional sector and one in the labour market. (2 marks)
 (b) For EACH of these responses, explain how it assists or hinders development. (4 marks)
- 3 (a) Why are the Bretton Woods institutions given this name? (1 mark)
 (b) Name TWO of the Bretton Woods institutions. (2 marks)
 (c) Explain how ONE of these institutions attempts to foster development. (3 marks)
- 4 (a) What is TNC an abbreviation for? (1 mark)
 (b) Describe the characteristics of a TNC. (2 marks)
 (c) For ONE named TNC, assess its impact on development in a country where its operations are located. (3 marks)
- 5 (a) Name TWO popular movements which have evolved as a response to globalisation. (2 marks)
 (b) For ONE of these movements, describe in detail the responses it has made to the challenges of globalisation. (4 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Explain what is meant by 'the ideology of free trade'. How has this ideology impacted on global economic developments?
- 2 Explain how globalisation is being assisted by information and communication technologies (ICTs).
- 3 What are the pros and cons of sourcing World Bank aid for development purposes?
- 4 Identify some of the major transnational corporations (TNCs) located in the Caribbean and explain how they influence development.

Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 Examine the criticisms levelled at the Bretton Woods institutions on the issue of sustainable development.
- 2 Analyse the CARIFORUM–EU Economic Partnership Agreement and assess how beneficial or otherwise it is likely to be for the Caribbean.
- 3 Evaluate the success of campaigning groups in the Caribbean on the evolution of regional policy.

12

The Integration Movement



University of the West Indies regional headquarters, Jamaica

There have always been conscious efforts at regional integration in the Caribbean, and we have experimented with different structures in the past. In some respects the regional integration movement is opposed to many of the processes associated with globalisation which we looked at in Chapter 11. Instead, regionalism seeks to bring the region closer together in a free trade area that gives preference to those within it over those in the wider world. Its priorities are focused on the region and its development, rather than on the opportunities which globalised free trade gives to capitalism and the free market.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. describe the evolution of the integration movement in the Caribbean;
2. explain the ways in which the integration movement has influenced development in the region.

12.1 Regional integration

It has long been apparent to Caribbean people that they form a natural regional entity. History and geography have contributed to this. Among New World groupings they are unique – they do not share the traditions of Hispanic America emanating from the Conquest and they are very different from the white settler communities of North America. That being said, history and geography also contribute to many of the divisions that continue to threaten regional integration even today (see Chapter 1).

As we saw in Chapter 1, the Caribbean is divided according to European languages and traditions. Any form of regional integration initiative encompassing the entire Caribbean was almost unthinkable until the relatively recent formation (in 1994) of the ACS (see page 291). Integration among members takes the form of broad levels of cooperation. The English-speaking territories, recognising their basic similarities, have long experimented with different forms of association: the West Indies Federation, CARIFTA and CARICOM were all efforts at regional integration, though only involving part of the region. On the subregional level, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) was another attempt at integration within the larger body of CARICOM. In addition, the existence of Antigua and Barbuda, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago point to attempts at integration on a much smaller scale, the subnational, even though some of these associations were imposed by the colonial authorities.

12.1.1 Evolution of the Integration Movement

The recognition that the peoples of the English-speaking Caribbean share a common identity, even within diversity, has prompted persistent efforts at regional integration. However, within the region there

are strong feelings about the autonomy of each territory and a general reluctance to cooperate without strong advantages being evident for the home territory. This tension between the forces of regionalism and more parochial, national sentiments tends to be exacerbated by globalisation. Development efforts in the Caribbean thus operate within a context characterised by this tension between regionalism and globalisation.

ACTIVITY 12.1

1. As you read through the following section, construct a timeline for the integration movement showing how regionalism has developed between 1958 and the present.
2. Survey members of your family, your friends and others in your community and consult print and online media produced in your country to answer the question: 'What are the dominant feelings in your country about regional integration?'

The West Indies Federation (1958–1962)

The **Federation** was an early attempt at developing a

A **federation** is a union of self-governing territories which are states or nations in their own right. The overarching authority for all the states is centralised in the federal government.

political union among the various British colonies. Guyana, Belize, the Bahamas and the Virgin Islands did not participate (see Fig. 12.1).

The capital of the Federation was established in Port of Spain, with the British Lord Hailes as Governor General and Sir Grantley Adams, Chief Minister of Barbados, as the Prime Minister. A Council of State (or senate) and a Federal House of Representatives were established. From the beginning the Federation suffered from inadequate financing and over time there was growing alienation between the federal authorities and local governing bodies.



Fig. 12.1 The West Indies Federation countries (shaded purple)

The Federation quickly ground to a halt as Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago bickered over their own interests. Eric Williams, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago at the time, was uncompromising in his refusal to accept unrestricted freedom of movement because he felt that the poor and dispossessed from other countries would flock to the twin-island state. Jamaica was not in favour of accepting a binding customs union and held a referendum in 1961 where the people voted against remaining in the Federation. Jamaica became independent soon after that. Williams's now rather notorious statement – '1 from 10 leaves 0' – correctly predicted that Jamaica's opt-out would also prompt the withdrawal of Trinidad and Tobago from the Federation. The 'agony of the eight' kept the idea of federation alive a little while longer among the Eastern Caribbean states, which have always been closer and more inclined towards cooperation. But they too eventually had to abandon the idea of federation.

Although the attempt at political union had ended, there were still other ongoing efforts at integrating various aspects of Caribbean life. For example:

- The University of the West Indies (UWI) was established as a three-campus regional-wide tertiary learning institution.
- The Regional Shipping Service, set up during the Federation to control the operation of the two ships

donated in 1962 by the government of Canada (the *Federal Palm* and the *Federal Maple*) continued after the break-up of the Federation.

- The Caribbean Meteorological Service was established in 1963 and was replaced in 1973 by the Caribbean Meteorological Organisation (CMO).
- Special arrangements were made for the islands of the Eastern Caribbean through the West Indies Associated States (WISA) Council of Ministers in 1966 and the Eastern Caribbean Common Market (ECCM) in 1968.

CARIFTA (1968)

Several years were to pass after the demise of the West Indies Federation before the idea of regional integration was raised again. By 1968 Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Guyana had achieved independence. Their political leaders were now motivated by the ideas of decolonisation, nationalism, self-determination and, most of all, economic development. Given the plight of small states, newly independent from the control of the colonial power (and from imperial grants and assistance), they agreed to try a type of economic integration which focused only on trade by removing trade barriers or tariffs on intra-regional trade in goods produced within the region.



Fig. 12.2 Members of CARIFTA

CARIFTA was formed in 1968 with the following members: Anguilla, Antigua, Barbados, British Honduras (Belize joined in 1971), Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, Montserrat, St Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago (see Fig. 12.2). Two of its major achievements were the establishment of the Commonwealth Caribbean Regional Secretariat in 1968 and the Caribbean Development Bank in 1969.

CARICOM (1973)

Less than a decade after CARIFTA was formed, Caribbean leaders found it necessary to extend and deepen the links within the regions by moving from a simple free trade area to a limited common market. This, they felt, would ensure a stronger path to development, especially in the face of greater competitiveness from global forces. The Treaty of Chaguaramas signed the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) into existence. It established the bases of a common market where there was internal free trade, a common external tariff and some provisions made for the eventual removal of restrictions on the movement of capital, services and labour within the region. For example, it was recognised that opening up the region to complete freedom of movement should come gradually. CARICOM has continued to be a significant regional organisation, gradually bringing many other regional agencies under its banner (§12.2.1). Fig. 12.3 shows the flags of member countries.



Fig. 12.3 Members of CARICOM

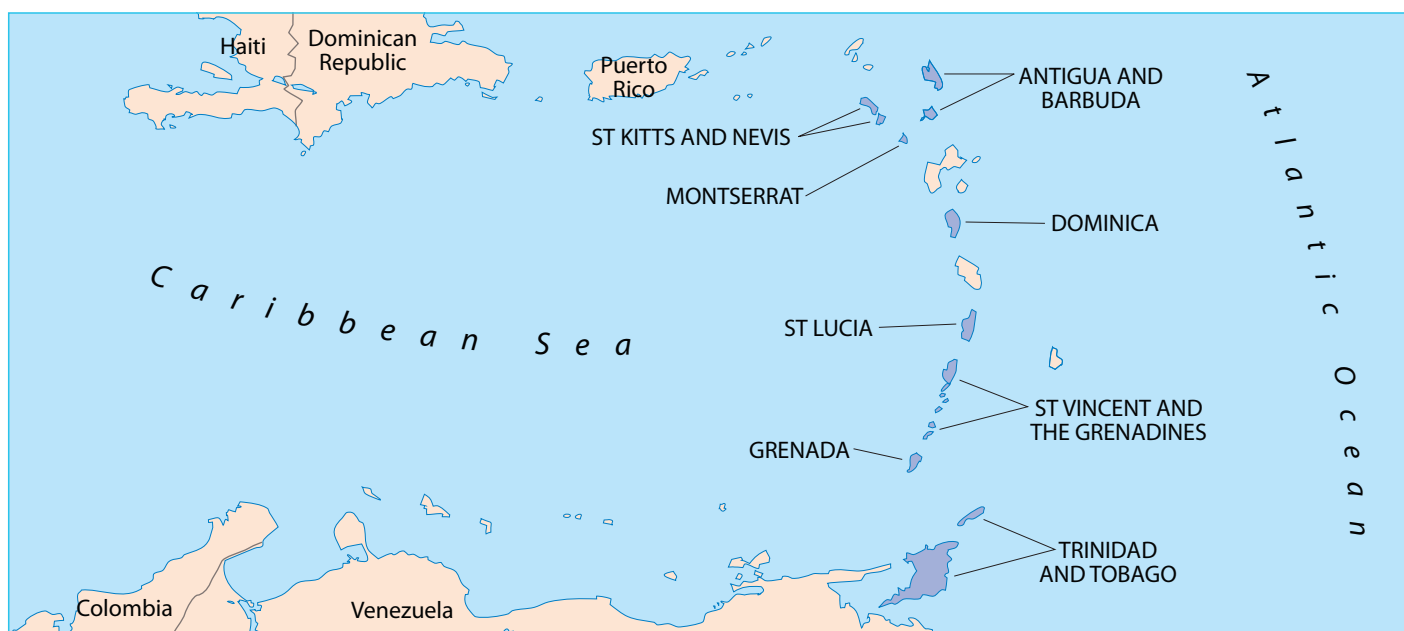


Fig. 12.4 Members of the OECS

Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)

In 1981 the Treaty of Basseterre formalised various aspects of economic cooperation among seven island states in the Eastern Caribbean – namely, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines (Fig. 12.4). The bases of this cooperation were laid earlier through WISA and the ECCM. The citizens of these countries have always felt a sense of unity and identity, making them a distinctive subregion within the Caribbean. As much smaller states they are all especially vulnerable to natural disasters and external shocks to their economies. They went into independence in the knowledge that their economic survival depended on greater cooperation between them.

Today the OECS is a recognised subregional grouping within CARICOM, where the unit of the subregion is used to promote the region, to pool resources and to rationalise development projects. For example, each country's national development plan is factored into the regional development strategy of the OECS and is based on the needs of the subregion as a whole. The aim of the OECS is to work for full economic union with free movement of people, goods, services and capital. It has already achieved a single currency, a central bank, a single judicial system and a joint civil aviation authority, as well as various initiatives in education, health and the environment.

Association of Caribbean States (ACS)

The ACS was established in 1994 among 25 nations of the Caribbean region (Fig. 12.5). Together they comprise

a population of over 237 million people and form the world's fourth-largest trading bloc, after the EU, the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA) and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). The primary aim in setting up this wider Caribbean regional body was to promote economic cooperation and encourage a coordinated approach to issues of importance to all of the countries of the region – trade, tourism, transportation, health, science and technology, education, culture and environmental protection. It is often the case that issues of crucial importance transcend national borders, and even those of regional entities such as CARICOM, and demand a wider network of cooperation. The secretariat of the organisation is located in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

◆ **Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands are not members of the ACS. Suggest a reason for this and comment on how it impacts on development in the region.**

Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA)

During the first few years of the twenty-first century much attention was focused on a projected free trade area of the Americas. The idea of the FTAA was to eliminate or reduce trade barriers among all the nation-states of the western hemisphere, with the exception of Cuba. It was strongly influenced by the WTO and the forces of internationalisation of trade, finance and capital. To create a free trade area for the entire western hemisphere



Fig. 12.5 Members of the ACS

would be a highly complicated exercise, the major area of difficulty being the great range in the development status of countries, especially those in Latin America and the Caribbean.

There were persistent negative reactions to the FTAA. The main arguments were that:

- such an undertaking would make social life subordinate to large corporations and promote capitalism and material wealth as dominant values;
- because of these values the environmental lobby would be ignored, since to preserve the environment or even establish conservationist schemes requires investment;
- there would be a race to the bottom in terms of prices and costs of production, and those who could not subsist on lowered costs would become economic casualties;
- there would be increasing inequality and poverty for those people and regions which could not compete effectively.

Critics pointed out that the FTAA was based on a narrow interpretation of globalisation, one driven by relatively few giant corporate bodies. They proposed alternative interpretations in which grassroots people were not sidelined, including socially responsible and environmentally sustainable trade. They stated that trade and investment should not be ends in themselves, but rather the instruments for achieving just and sustainable development.

The FTAA, originally to be implemented in 2005, was not signed by its proposed members. Time will tell whether the idea of a free trade area across the American continents will ever come to fruition.

Research mini-project

Resistance against the FTAA has seen various Latin American countries coming together – for example, Venezuela and Bolivia, among others, who are also courting alliances with Cuba. Conduct independent research to find out how this movement is faring and what the response is from the US.

SUMMARY

The English-speaking Caribbean has experimented with different forms of regional integration largely because of the threat of being overwhelmed, economically speaking, by world producers of goods and services. However, there is also a sense of common identity and a yearning to come together as a region – though that is constantly threatened by nationalist sentiments which arise from time to time. Some see CARICOM as important and fundamental to the survival and empowerment of Caribbean people in an age of globalisation and internationalisation, while others feel that the commitment towards regionalism

among Caribbean people is only half-hearted. Thus, the regionalism movement is fraught with its own challenges even as it tries to better prepare the Caribbean to exist in an increasingly globalising environment.

12.2

Achievements and challenges of regional organisations

The regional integration movement in the Caribbean has generated a number of organisations whose work is to carry out the mandate of functional cooperation. As the previous section has shown, regional integration must take into account the wider global context of the increasing internationalisation of flows of trade, capital, finance and information. As we will see, regional organisations too are adopting the tenets of free trade ideology, although regionalism is opposed to globalisation as a force that erodes the distinctions between countries. Thus, in both regionalism and globalisation there are contradictory elements.

12.2.1 The Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

By 1973 there were substantial changes on the international front which prompted Caribbean leaders to seek deeper forms of integration. The preferential tariffs enjoyed under the Lomé Convention (see Box 11.3), especially for sugar, were being threatened by Britain joining the European Common Market. In addition, the Bretton Woods system of keeping foreign exchange fixed collapsed in the early 1970s, opening the way to internationalisation of capital flows and the increasing penetration of TNCs in the region.

In such a global environment, CARICOM was intended to give Caribbean countries more diplomatic and bargaining weight in their relations with outside countries, as well as provide a specific path to development. Regionalism, then, was felt to give opportunities to Caribbean countries trying to make an impact on a globalising world. For example, CARICOM established the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM) which was to coordinate the Community's external negotiations. CARICOM thus entered into discussions with international bodies on the future of the Lomé Convention, the FTAA and relations between the ACP and the EU at the WTO. An outcome of this interaction between CARICOM and the

global players was the perceived necessity to transform CARICOM itself into a more integrated economic unit and deliberately seek partners and alliances. Through initiatives brought by CARICOM, the ACS came into being in 1994, and not long afterwards (in 2001) the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas was signed, bringing the CSME into existence (see §12.2.5).

However, the promised increase in trade and economic development throughout the Caribbean has not materialised. Some countries with initially stronger economies, such as Trinidad and Tobago, have benefited from free trade but others have not seen an increase in intra-regional service trade or strong two-way cross-border capital flows helping to create indigenous Caribbean companies. This is one of the factors prompting deeper integration of the economic system into a single market and a single economy. A single market cannot discriminate against other parts of itself.

Another major challenge for CARICOM is that regionalism is not a consistent and urgent desire on the part of Caribbean people. The driving force behind it has always been one or two visionaries or aggressive regionalists who have pushed the ideas and policies forward. As a group, Caribbean leaders tend to be apathetic about deepening the linkages between the countries of the region. That may stem from the nationalism which puts one's own country first alongside a reluctance to consider the broader picture.

On the whole, CARICOM seems removed from the day-to-day lives of people in the various territories, perhaps because it is not seen as having much authority to enforce a decision. What authority it has seems to disappear as one goes closer to the context of each territory. For example, if Tobago or Nevis or Barbuda, as subnational entities, want to consult with CARICOM, is this need recognised? This was brought home very clearly in 1994 as events unfolded in Haiti and President Aristide was ousted: CARICOM countries were powerless and divided. A similar situation occurred ten years later, when a returned Aristide was deposed by a coup d'état. He accused the United States of orchestrating a campaign against him, and even implicated Jamaican politicians. Haiti is a member of CARICOM but there was no clear policy or course of action that CARICOM leaders could take to come to the aid of one of its members.

ACTIVITY 12.2

Examine possible reasons why CARICOM does not have the machinery to enforce its decisions. How do you think the organisation should deal with situations such as the ousting of the Haitian president?

12.2.2 University of the West Indies (UWI)

The University College began in 1949 in Mona, Jamaica, and by the early 1960s campuses had been established at Cave Hill, Barbados (Fig. 12.6), and St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago. The UWI was one of the earliest forms of regional integration and it has grown to become the premier **tertiary institution** of the

Tertiary institutions are all educational establishments teaching above CAPE level, including both universities and technical colleges.



Fig. 12.6 UWI Cave Hill Campus, Barbados

English-speaking Caribbean. However, the internationalisation of education systems poses threats to regional bodies and the UWI is no exception. The three campus countries have benefited from having a fully-fledged university situated locally, which minimises costs considerably for their citizens. The non-campus territories, however, have always smarted under this arrangement, especially as they contribute funds for the university's upkeep but have only small extramural departments established as distance education centres. The asymmetrical relationship between the campus and non-campus territories has fuelled the fires of nationalism and led to different countries striving to establish their own universities. Belize, for example, has established the University of Belize. In reaction to that the UWI has established a fourth campus – a virtual campus known as the Open Campus – to address more effectively the needs of those countries without a physical campus.

Non-campus territories have sought to link their community colleges and teacher colleges with tertiary institutions such as the UWI to award associate degrees. Students can then go on to UWI or another university to complete the degree in two years. It is only a matter of time before each community college is able to put the necessary programmes and quality checks in place to award its own undergraduate degrees. This might come about most easily by collaborating with the UWI, so that local tutors can teach some of its programmes under the coordination of UWI lecturers who visit from time to time. There is also an umbrella organisation linking tertiary educational establishments, called the Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions (ACTI).

Ironically, two campus territories have also established their own universities – the University of Technology in Jamaica (UTEC) and the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT); both are technologically oriented. The UWI cannot meet the demand of all those who now aspire to post-secondary education. And it is not involved in all kinds of post-secondary subject areas, particularly technical-vocational and industrial arts and crafts. Thus, a demand has been growing which the UWI cannot fulfil; moreover, its entry requirements and the competition to access places can be high. This situation has played into the hands of those who wish to establish national universities, rivalling the regional institution of the UWI. Thus, ironically, one of the strongest forces for regional development in the Caribbean has actually contributed to the setting up of national universities.

Suggest how the UWI can enter into partnership with national universities such as UTEC and UTT to form a 'more balanced' offering of tertiary education programmes.

In 1974 UWI partnered with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation to set up the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC), which provides media-related tertiary education (Box 12.1).

The increasing internationalisation of education systems is also driving this movement, at least at UTT. Most of its programmes are in technology and engineering and are offered through existing arrangements with foreign universities, such as the Southern Alberta Institute of

BOX 12.1**Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC)**

The Institute is part of the UWI, Mona Campus, Jamaica. It offers a range of undergraduate and graduate courses in communication and media-related subjects, for example:

- three-year Bachelor of Arts degrees in Digital Media Production, Integrated Marketing Communication, Media Communication and Journalism;
- one-year diploma in Media and Communication;
- postgraduate MA, MPhil and PhD courses in Communication Studies;
- MA in Communication for Social and Behaviour Change.

The course application is made through UWI, and has the same entry requirements: for three-year undergraduate courses you need five GCEs or CXC equivalent at Grades 1–3, including two at CAPE level or equivalent SATs, e.g. Grade 12 high school transcript with a minimum GPA of 3.0 and a minimum score of 1600 for SAT 1.

Recently the Institute has branched out into new courses such as a six-month intensive animation course, which had its first graduates in February 2014. This is set to become a regular feature of the Institute's education programme.

Technology in Canada. The challenge for the UWI is to position itself so that these new universities are linked to it, strengthening tertiary education in the whole region. Although they may have sprung up in response to strong national demands, they can still be incorporated into a more balanced regional framework for tertiary education. A more serious threat comes from the proliferation in the region of foreign universities offering distance learning programmes or other arrangements. Quality assurance is often difficult to ascertain in the way these programmes are run. For example, the UK's Brunel University/Henley College of Management offers business degree programmes through partnership with local schools, which will teach the programme; the students are then examined locally. The foreign university only certifies the student, and for this foreign credential students pay a lot of money. The UK's Sheffield University has similar arrangements throughout the region but lecturers from Sheffield do actually participate from time to time.

The UWI has produced many of our greatest leaders, in all fields and disciplines. For a small developing region our educational accomplishments have always tended to be world class, and the UWI has provided much of the impetus for this achievement. However, the strong regionalism that first set up the UWI and ensured its success is being broken down by equally strong global forces leading to the internationalisation of education systems. This means that it is increasingly easy for foreign universities to set up some part of their operations here (even just the granting of certificates, as we saw above) and proceed to conduct business. Also, they may not even

come here, but we can go there via distance learning modes. Thus, the new technologies too are whittling away at UWI's pre-eminence in the region. For the UWI to take advantage of international developments it will have to offer programmes abroad, enter into collaborative arrangements with foreign universities and strengthen its distance learning provision. Ironically, this must mark a new phase in the existence of a regional institution.

12.2.3 Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC)

In 1972 for the first time the territories of the former British Caribbean were able to dispense with the centuries-old tradition of following British syllabuses and sitting examinations which were set and marked in Britain. The Oxford and Cambridge Examination Syndicates gradually gave way to syllabuses developed by Caribbean people and examinations set and marked in the Caribbean, with substantially more Caribbean content and attention to the local and regional context. Today there are 16 participating territories in CSEC (Caribbean Secondary Examinations) and CAPE (Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations).

CXC has developed syllabuses covering a wide range of subjects which go beyond the traditional academic disciplines to include those of importance to social development and the labour market; for example, music, art and design, Caribbean Studies, Communication Studies, environmental science and technical-vocational curricula. They have emphasised more meaningful learning by establishing a tradition of school-based assessments which encourage student-led

projects, independent learning and critical thinking and inquiry skills. Formative assessments tend to have more educational value than a system of terminal examinations where the final score is all that is taken into consideration in awarding certificates.

A present challenge being faced by both the CXC and educational institutions in the Caribbean is the internationalisation of examination systems. For example, the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) has become increasingly popular as an alternative path to post-secondary education in the US. If an individual obtains a good score on this test he or she can have access, and perhaps scholarships and half-scholarships, to universities abroad. This means that the sixth form as an institution is

declining and that the CXC will be examining a decreasing clientele. The investment that the CXC has made in developing and maintaining the CAPE may not bring the expected returns unless it becomes very competitive in the region. One way of doing this could be by offering *distance learning*, so that, for example, a private candidate could do a CAPE programme which is taught at a community college via distance learning (see Box 12.2).

The challenge and the possible solutions are very much related to how systems are being internationalised. The CXC as a regional examinations syndicate is facing threats from students in the Caribbean now being able to access SATs, and even the tuition to help them, right here in the region. The institutions that the SATs make accessible do not need the CAPE qualification. As we have seen, the solution chosen by CXC has been to become more competitive, to seek different markets rather than relying only on the captive market of sixth-form students.

What we are seeing here is that when we regionalise something, say examinations, at some point in time global forces will intervene in our arrangements. We need to be always vigilant and constantly assessing the trends around us. The SATs are an avenue to tertiary education in foreign countries, and also a way for foreign countries to select the best talent we have to offer. It is not often that young people seeking the best possible tertiary education think along these dimensions when assessing, for example, a CAPE qualification against those like the SATs.

BOX 12.2

CXC and distance learning

In spite of efforts to use distance learning to increase its competitiveness, today the CXC is no longer involved in distance education. In 2002 it entered into a partnership with the Commonwealth of Learning in Vancouver, Canada, to pursue training in writing modules for distance education. Materials were written for Caribbean Studies and other CSEC and CAPE subjects. The Trinidad and Tobago government bought millions of dollars-worth of these, which were distributed free of charge to schools. In Jamaica, CXC trained tutors from the Portmore Community College, which was selected to pilot the programme by offering courses at a fee (a package containing the materials and how to use them was part of the deal). The tutors were expected to meet face to face on occasion and a whole programme was developed. The pilot lasted for a few months and then collapsed.

The reason for this failure is that, as an examining body, CXC was attempting to enter the realm of teaching and learning and the actual delivery of courses. It did not have the dedicated staff to oversee a distance education programme and by outsourcing it to institutions such as community colleges it lost control. CXC is unique in its leadership and has instituted many innovations in syllabus development and measurement and assessment. In attempting to broaden the range of its activities, and thus generate added income, it found itself overextended and had to halt this innovation.

ACTIVITY 12.3

There has been a lot of disagreement in the region about the currency of a CAPE diploma. With classmates, brainstorm the possible advantages and disadvantages of choosing to do SATs rather than CAPE to access tertiary education.

12.2.4

West Indies Cricket Board (WICB)

Cricket represents one of the earliest forms of Caribbean integration. It is the only sport which has consistently fielded a regional team, and it is easy to see why the spirit of nationalism and Caribbean identity is bound up in cricket (see Chapter 13). The fortunes of the West Indies cricket team have made us proud in the past and as a region our cricketing heroes are from all over the Caribbean – Sir Frank Worrell, Sir Garfield Sobers, Malcolm Marshall (Barbados), Sir Vivian Richards and Sir Curtley Ambrose, who was knighted in 2014 (Antigua and Barbuda), Rohan Kanhai, Alvin Kallicharan (Guyana), Brian Lara (Trinidad and Tobago)



Fig. 12.7 **Brian Lara**

and many others. More recently, however, the cricket team has given some dismal performances and there has been much debate on the reasons for its deterioration. Arguments tend to focus on the captaincy, the lack of discipline among the players, the fact that there is no long-term policy of recruiting and training exceptionally talented children in the sport, and the administration of the WICB. While all the above are challenges, the WICB as overall manager of the sport is in a way responsible for all of them.

A number of serious issues have arisen for the WICB over the past decade or so.

- Firstly, there is the impact of corporate globalisation (see Chapter 11) on the sport. The stance taken by Digicel in the mid-2000s (Box 12.3) was an example of this. Global capital has now infiltrated the world of cricket in a way we have never witnessed before. What was a force for regional integration has now been put on a firm business footing, where individual endorsement contracts must be vetted by the sponsoring agency as a matter of course. The West Indies Players Association (WIPA) is now making demands for salaries and other conditions of work which we have not witnessed before.
- The advent of T20 cricket in the region also has implications for Caribbean cricket. While the Test matches and the One Day Internationals (50 overs) require a West Indian regional team or a national team for inter-regional matches, T20 teams can have individual players from any country. Many West Indian team players are highly paid members of different Indian clubs in T20 cricket (see Chapter 13). This puts the WICB in a position where it may

lose 'control' of its players. While players must get permission to play, for instance, in the Indian Premier League (IPL), the high status and salaries which a player earns in those clubs puts pressure on the WICB to almost always give consent. One consequence of this is that regionally there is declining interest in Test cricket. Not only that but many players exhibit poor form for Test cricket because they are involved all year in cricket competitions across the globe. There is no rest period for a world-renowned player.

- The present system of duality in the world of cricket challenges the WICB in yet another way. We used to speak of the captain of the West Indies cricket team. Now the West Indies has two captains – one for Test cricket and one for T20 cricket. And both tend to be involved in any international team which we field. The conflicts posed by clashing personalities and shifting allegiances to different players are another source of dissatisfaction which the WICB has to settle.

BOX 12.3

Case Study: Digicel and the WICB

When the Irish company Digicel, new to the Caribbean and a giant in the telecommunications industry, became the sponsor of the West Indies cricket team in 2004, it objected to the endorsement contracts that some players still held with Cable and Wireless. The latter was a British firm with a long presence in the Caribbean, and a previous sponsor of the team. This objection became a major contentious issue, with Digicel directing the WICB to drop certain key players if they did not relinquish their contract endorsements with Cable and Wireless. Digicel had committed US\$20 million over five years to improve West Indies cricket and was thus in a position to give directives to the WICB, which had to comply.

In its defence the WICB explained that Digicel had agreed to fund the development of cricket which not only focused on the West Indies team but also on youth cricket and the nurturing of cricketers from a very early age. The purpose of this was to combat what had been one of the problems of cricket in the past – a lack of emphasis on a long-term vision in recruitment and training. However, in seeking to remedy one of the problems, another was created – the domination of the sport by a transnational corporation capable of infusing millions of dollars in its development.

Thus, the WICB as a continuing force for integration of the Caribbean is slipping somewhat. Some cricketers who do not get 'picked' by the Board for Test cricket, say, have the option to pursue their careers in India playing club cricket for much greater sums than if they had played Test cricket. The power of the Board is thus diminishing because of global developments in the sport.

ACTIVITY 12.4

Consider these questions:

1. Do you believe that the declining importance of Test cricket is likely to negatively impact on the WICB as a force for West Indian integration?
2. What impact do you think the increasing internationalisation of sports in general will have on West Indies cricket and the WICB?
3. How can the WICB effectively manage these challenges?

12.2.5 CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME)

In 1989 CARICOM decided on an integrated development strategy and revised the Treaty of Chaguaramas to accommodate this new vision for regional integration (see §12.2.1). This strategy – the Grand Anse Declaration – laid out a framework to deepen economic integration by going beyond a common market towards a single market and economy. It also made provisions to widen the community to incorporate Haiti and Suriname, which are today full members, and committed itself to strengthen trading links with non-traditional partners.

The CSME is designed to represent a single economic space where people, goods, services and capital can move freely. One of its greatest advantages is that it will encourage intra-regional trade and allow CARICOM states to negotiate as a single entity, thus affording them a better opportunity to influence policies concerning global trade. This will require the harmonisation and coordination of social, economic and trade policies by participating members. However, there has to be a guarantee that goods and services are of an acceptable standard. The Caribbean Regional Organization on Standards of Quality (CROSQ) was established to set guidelines and regional standards for members in the manufacture and trade of goods. The CSME also made necessary the Caribbean Court of Justice to provide the legal basis for its operations.

A major challenge for the CSME, however, is that its members (especially the smaller states) are uncertain about whether their existing businesses and workforces

can survive the increased competition when those that are more successful enter the local market. Many states feel that the economically stronger countries, such as Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados, will effectively put smaller firms in the other territories out of business. While the CSME is putting in place a protocol to assist states experiencing hardship in the transition to a single market, there is still a great deal of fear. This situation seems identical to the globalisation scenario discussed earlier, in which the developing countries of the world (including the Caribbean) feel vulnerable to the actions of the developed countries under a regime of free trade. Here in CARICOM the CSME replicates those pressures in a microcosm. It raises some fundamental questions about the context of development – the CSME is a regional strategy reacting to the internationalisation of trade, finance, capital and information flows in a free global market. It opposes the effects of unbridled free trade on the small economies of the Caribbean, yet it finds itself resorting to that same strategy within the CARICOM region in order to mount a good defence against the free traders of the world!

Access to at least ONE of the [blogging sites](#) devoted to discussion of the CSME. Organise the arguments which the bloggers offer for and against the CSME.

A [blogging site](#) is a place for serious discussion of a specific issue on the Internet. It is an example of globalisation because the people engaging in the discussion may be from anywhere in the region or the world but are giving informed opinions based on how they are being affected. The discussion tends to be of a high quality, although strong opinions may be expressed. It is said that this may be the newest form of the mass media.

Another major challenge for the CSME is that it requires very deep levels of cooperation and commitment on the part of many actors in one country, and that is sometimes an insurmountable barrier. For the CSME to be fully operational all regional governments have to agree on certain policies and take them to their various parliaments, where they have to be inserted into the domestic laws and regulations. At each point and level of these procedures changes are called for and major disagreements often result in a breakdown in talks. These agreements affect a wide variety of procedures which all need to be standardised – customs and excise, consumer protection, banking and securities, intellectual property, standards and technical regulations, labelling of food and drugs, workers' rights, trade union regulations and labour laws.

The creation of the CSME is the most ambitious project yet undertaken by the regional integration movement. Europe is the only other region which has sought to institute a process of integration similar to that of CARICOM. There the decisions made by regional bodies were respected and entered into law, which then had to be ratified by national law. Here the decisions taken by CARICOM bodies still largely rely on intergovernmental cooperation and harmonisation exercises which try to avoid national rivalries and fears. Thus, the successful implementing of one economy in the region is going to test severely the willingness of each country to put regional interests first.

12.2.6 Regional Security System (RSS)

In October 1982, five states in the Eastern Caribbean – Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines – signed a memorandum of understanding creating a Regional Security System (RSS). They were joined by St Kitts and Nevis in 1983 and Grenada in 1985. A formal treaty followed in 1996, and the headquarters was confirmed as being in Bridgetown, Barbados. The RSS now has wider responsibilities to CARICOM under the Treaty on Security Assistance, and the Barbados headquarters also houses the Coordinating Secretariat of the CARICOM Security Assistance Mechanism.

The original memorandum came at a time when Grenada was being governed by the socialist policies of the Bishop government (see Box 8.9). There was some uneasiness, too, among the US security forces about Bishop's intentions in the region, which encouraged the

US to support the initiative. Indeed, the RSS relied on US and British intelligence expertise in forming and designing the security system. Its first venture was to overturn the Bishop government with the help of US forces in October 1983.

The RSS sought to put in place mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes and agreement on common threats such as drugs, arms trafficking, disaster cooperation and terrorism. The regional communications information and intelligence system needed to be upgraded. Since then the US and RSS member states have taken part in several exercises simulating the takeover of an airport by armed forces and planning and executing a strategy to retake the facility. The RSS remains a 'hybrid' organisation combining both military and policing elements.

While there has been an upgrading of personnel and security measures, the RSS faces several challenges:

- Funds are limited to carry out the original intentions of maintaining databases on intelligence issues, extending the training to more of the armed forces and monitoring the region by better equipping the coastguard service.
- Some of the territories do not agree with the extent of US involvement in developing the system and carrying out manoeuvres locally, including patrolling coastal waters.
- As a security system for the Caribbean, the RSS needs to be able to police all of the Caribbean if it is to address the security issues. It needs to include not only all CARICOM countries, but also other Caribbean countries facing similar risks and security issues.

How does geography impact on the development of an effective RSS in the Caribbean?

12.2.7 Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)

The CDB is an associate institution of CARICOM. Its function is to reduce poverty and encourage development through loans for investment, working through member countries. On its website (www.caribank.org) it declares that: 'The CDB empowers communities in the region through much-needed equity investments, loans, grants, guarantees, policy advice, and technical assistance.'

Organisation

The Board of Governors heads the Bank and appoints the President, who is responsible for its day-to-day running.



Fig. 12.8 Securing coastal waters

There are a number of departments dealing with the specific work of the Bank, such as a legal department, an IT department, a human resources department, a finance and corporate planning department and the Bank secretariat. The Board of Governors meets annually in different venues around the region to discuss Caribbean economic development and the continuing role of the Bank. The Bank produces a yearly report dealing with such matters as financial management, the Bank's initiatives and programmes, human resources and regional economic performance.

There is also a private sector development unit (PSDU). This recognises the value of the private sector in economic development and seeks to widen the remit of the Bank to include the support of financial institutions lending to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and the involvement of private sector investors in infrastructure development. Thus the Bank is aware that regional competitiveness is important and that the private sector has a part to play in this.

Membership

Country members of the Bank not only have the right to borrow money, but also enjoy voting rights, thus being part of the decision-making apparatus. The membership is mainly from the Commonwealth Caribbean but also includes Haiti and Suriname, making it very close to the CARICOM membership. The full list (as of 2014) is: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands. Other regional members, who are not entitled to borrow funds, include Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela. Non-regional members, who have voting rights but no borrowing rights, include Canada, China, Germany, Italy and the UK.

History

In 1966 a Commonwealth Caribbean Conference commissioned a report on the possibility of establishing a financial institution for the region with the specific function of serving the territories of the Commonwealth Caribbean, not all of which were independent at that time. The Bank was finally established in 1969 by an agreement signed in Kingston, Jamaica, which came into force in January 1970 with funding from the World Bank (IBRD), the InterAmerican Development Bank (IDB) and the UNDP. Its brief was to work towards regional integration and peaceful economic development

by providing money for loans with the purpose of investment in infrastructure and other development projects. Its headquarters are at St Michael, Barbados.

Research mini-project

Download from the Internet, or consult in a library, the latest report from the Caribbean Development Bank. Identify an important issue, and construct a motion for debate. Then prepare notes for two speeches, one in support of the motion, the other against.

12.3

Regionalism and globalisation

As we have seen, the regional integration movement, which has had a long existence in the Caribbean, is today being shaped by the perceived threat to nation-states' autonomy and economic survival from globalisation. Ironically, the regional integration movement is using the same strategy as the global movement – free trade – to increase the volume of trade between members so as to boost output and productivity. At the same time, CARICOM is ensuring that as a collective body we can maintain competitive prices and limit the extent to which the region is flooded with cheaper products. Thus, the regional outlook is to protect the Caribbean from global forces of competition by integrating various aspects of our economies.

Regionalism, though, is just as complex as globalisation and there are many contradictions within it. While most people agree that it is beneficial in the face of the global threat, the mechanisms and the levels of cooperation which are necessary are hampered by a number of factors.

Regional organisations such as the UWI, the CXC, the WICB and the CTO, among others discussed above, have grown over time to represent the Caribbean as a distinctive region. They have deepened the processes of regionalism and encouraged a commitment to that process. However, to offset this threat Caribbean regional organisations now have to become increasingly internationalised. Both external and national initiatives are putting regional education organisations, for example, in jeopardy by removing some of their clientele and offering new and different curricula. Cricket is today dominated by the Twenty20 form of cricket, which is tending to internationalise and commercialise West Indian cricket in ways that have become normal

with other sports globally, such as basketball and soccer. This demands that we try to maintain some form of regionalism even as we are forced to recognise that international forces are impacting on and shaping our traditional regional organisations.



SUMMARY

The efforts at cooperation highlighted here show the continued difficulty Caribbean countries face in trying to develop and maintain regionally integrated organisations. While most people seem convinced that trade is an issue of such great importance that we need a CSME to seek our collective interests, security issues do not seem to be so high on the agenda. The continuing interest of the US in the security of the region (keeping its own backyard safe) will continue to be an issue in the Caribbean because some countries may not approve of US activities in the region. The US, on the other hand, will not be likely to listen to us seriously because we do not yet have an independent organisation which deals with these issues and represents the region.



Wrap Up

All the organisations which have been discussed in the later sections of this chapter echo the themes of the first section – regionalism and globalisation. The UWI, CARICOM, the CSME and others were established out of a sense of and passion for regionalism. This emanates from a view of the region as a resource that can be tapped in order to position it against global forces which are tending to neutralise it as a region. This sense of regionalism goes so far as to use the tactics of the global world to strengthen the region. Thus, free trade ideology, apparently working in favour only of developed countries, was deliberately instituted in the Caribbean once the area was hedged around with a common external tariff. This has not only been tried here but also in North America and Mexico (NAFTA), the EU and other trading blocs. Globalisation is forcing and deepening regional movements. Regionalism, though, could be fracturing owing to nationalist pressures and the internationalisation of systems which manage to stake a claim in the region. Both forces and their inherent contradictions represent the context of development today in the Caribbean.

Research TOPICS

The topics in this chapter can be developed in different ways. One example is the issue of foreign dominance of the productive sector. This carries forward ideas from Chapter 11.

- You may want to investigate whether trade liberalisation and openness of the economy is really occurring, and to what extent, in your country. You can do this by researching government statistics on exports, imports and tariffs, and the extent of foreign ownership.
- Make a list of the major industries and businesses in your country and categorise them according to ownership (foreign or local, and if foreign whether it is a TNC or not), and whether they are state- or privately owned. Some industries and establishments may be partly state-owned, some may be partly foreign-owned.
- Break down the productive sector into primary, secondary and tertiary industries. Note if there are any quaternary industries.
- Try to come to some conclusions about whether or not there is foreign dominance of business in your country. The data you collected for the research topics above will be useful for this, especially if you represent them using graphs. Remember, though, that foreign dominance is not only a matter of quantity (numbers of businesses owned by foreigners) but rather whether the output is significantly larger than that of local companies in the same business, whether exports are higher, and whether employment is greater. (Another thing to keep in mind also is that, while output and exports may be higher, foreign companies may employ less labour.)
- Examine the structure of the productive sector in your country as shown in the data you have collected, and from this information go on to make inferences about the effects which trading patterns seem to be having on the economy. Remember that trading patterns can be influenced by both globalisation and regionalism.
- What are the implications of this issue for the regional movement?
- Extend your study of foreign domination to include regional organisations such as the RSS.

Structured response questions

- 1 (a) What do the letters CSME stand for? (1 mark)
 (b) When did the CSME come into effect? (1 mark)
 (c) Describe TWO difficulties associated with the CSME. (4 marks)
- 2 (a) Identify ONE example of hemispheric cooperation in which the Caribbean is involved. (1 mark)
 (b) Identify ONE example of subnational cooperation within CARICOM. (1 mark)
 (c) Describe ONE achievement of CARICOM. (2 marks)
 (d) State ONE challenge faced by CARICOM. (2 marks)
- 3 (a) Identify TWO differences between a free trade area and a common market. (2 marks)
 (b) Give TWO reasons why the West Indies Federation failed. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) What is the relationship between the University of the West Indies and the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication? (2 marks)
 (b) Describe TWO challenges faced by the UWI. (4 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Describe the evolution of the integration movement in the Caribbean.
- 2 Write an account of the work of ONE regional organisation, showing its contribution to regional development.
- 3 Explain how regionalism and globalisation constitute two opposing forces.

Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 Analyse the contradictions inherent in the regional integration movement in the Caribbean.
- 2 Discuss the extent to which the development needs of the region are being adequately addressed.
- 3 Evaluate the success of the Regional Security System in combining military and police aspects of security.

13

Contributions of Sport



Football, anyone?

While sport has very wide popular appeal, it is not usually regarded as playing a role in national or regional development. Traditionally, sport appealed to ideas of physical prowess, winning fame and glory and achieving health and fitness. However, the emphasis in development conceptualising is now on human development. In this conception, sport can contribute significantly to how people experience equity, productivity, empowerment and sustainability. In this chapter we explore and critically evaluate the importance of sport in contributing to development in the region.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. distinguish between leisure, sport, recreation, play and physical education;
2. describe the contribution of sport to development in the Caribbean;
3. critically analyse the impact of sport on human development;
4. appreciate the importance of international recognition in the contribution of sport to regional identity;
5. discuss the relationships between sport and society.

13.1

Sports, leisure and recreation

Before we can engage in a discussion of how sports may contribute to development in the region, we need to clarify what we mean by sports, especially in relation to similar terms which tend to be used interchangeably. The following discussion clarifies these terms and raises important issues to consider in a study of development.

Sport has grown with the increase in **leisure time** in

Leisure is that time which a person has to do with as he or she pleases, time which is not devoted to work, doing chores, running errands or fulfilling family and other obligations.

modern societies. One's leisure time can be spent with the family but the understanding here is that it is spent doing 'fun' or relaxing things. Many individuals today enjoy a great deal of leisure time as a result of automation (in business, industry, agriculture and in the home), the five-day work week, paid mandatory holidays and widely available childminding services and early childhood education centres.

The different forms and avenues that leisure takes are usually associated with fun and relaxation which help to *recreate* (or renew) the individual. Forms of recreation, then, are activities which people engage in during their leisure time. For recreation, one might read a book, travel, play a game, watch television, work in the garden, take aerobics classes, 'hang out' with friends, party or become involved in sport. Of course, professional athletes are not engaged in forms of recreation when they play their sport. But amateur sportspersons, even those who follow a strict training regimen to meet the criteria to join clubs and for competitions, are using their leisure

time to engage in recreation, albeit in a more focused and demanding way than most people.

'Sport' refers to physical activities which have a history and precise rules about how a game is played; it may also refer to more casual activities such as aerobics, or even walking. The goals of someone who participates in sport are usually to improve physical fitness and all-round well-being, as well as to improve proficiency in the particular activity. For some, being a sportsperson means participating in keen competition at the club level (amateur or professional), and for a small minority sport represents the achievement of excellence at the Olympics or at the global level. This wider-ranging understanding of sport encompasses the activities of the whole population and is better than the narrow definitions of yesteryear, which were limited to competitive games and focused on the talents and exploits of super-athletes. This is in keeping with the thrust to promote sport as an avenue for human development, which must thus be relevant to everyone.

Sport contrasts with 'play', which is a spontaneous activity which children engage in where they make up the rules, or there may be no rules or even no objective other than immediate enjoyment. Both sports and play are forms of recreation pursued in leisure time. However, in schools, sports may come under the umbrella of 'physical education', where they are not considered to be leisure activities or recreation but have specific curriculum objectives: for example, health and fitness, movement for coordination, poise and grace, and teamwork for nurturing values such as cooperation and good sportsmanship. And in early childhood and primary education play is believed to have positive educational outcomes, such as problem-solving and developing a broad range of other learning and social skills, so that it becomes an integral part of the curriculum.

ACTIVITY 13.1

Reflect on how you spend your time each day: for example, work/study, chores, errands, domestic duties, family obligations, clubs, sport, being with friends, watching television, listening to music, sleeping, or any other activity.

1. Compute how much of your time in a week is spent as 'leisure'.
2. To what extent do you engage in recreational activities which are fun and relaxing in your leisure time?
3. To what extent is sport part of your recreational activities?
4. How similar is your profile about leisure, recreation and sport to that of your friends?

In the following discussion on sport and its potential for human development, then, there are at least two distinct levels we should keep in mind. Firstly, there is the world of professional or competitive sports much publicised by the mass media (the world of elite athletes), where sport can be characterised as 'entertainment' and attracts paying spectators. Secondly, there is sport offered in schools or engaged in for recreational purposes, where people who are not professional athletes participate in sport as a form of 'physical activity', usually for intrinsic rewards, such as enjoyment, health and fitness and maintaining social relationships. These sports may or may not be played on a competitive basis.

We should also keep in mind the tendency to restrict any discussion about sport to youth and the able-bodied. For example, the names of ministries of government which have responsibility for sport also tend to be tied to youth development. While that link is very important in promoting the human development potential of youth, other groups also need their potential to be recognised and promoted. Sports should therefore be conceived of as activities which include everyone. Retired persons also have leisure time, more so perhaps than other people. So do disabled persons. The Paralympics is an attempt to recognise and promote sporting activities among the disabled.

Finally, there is an assumption running through the entire discussion about sport, play, leisure and recreation that these activities serve to balance the time and energy spent on other types of activities which may be stressful, urgent and have to do with making a living.

**SUMMARY**

Sport has been sidelined in the national dialogue about development simply because it has not been recognised as an activity which includes everyone in the society. The perceptions of sport have traditionally tended to confine it to the world of professional athletes and competitive events. Even in schools that view tends to be dominant. Today, as discussions about development are increasingly based on human development and a more inclusive idea of development, these narrow ideas about the contribution of sport to national development are being questioned. In the view of human development, sport, leisure and recreation are all related and represent an avenue for people in a country to increase equity, productivity and empowerment in their lives.

13.2**Sport and development**

Many people speak about sport in glowing terms, praising its contribution to the good of the individual and society. In this section some of the ways that sport can contribute to development are described and critically evaluated.

13.2.1**Generation of Income**

One way that professional sports and organised amateur sporting associations can contribute to development in the region is by marketing their activities to generate increased income. This increases productive activity in the economy and enables a particular sport to be self-sufficient. As it is, almost every sport in the Caribbean has to rely on some form of assistance from outside its club or association. If there is a recognised potential for drawing many spectators, particularly from both regional and international countries, a sporting body will usually be able to acquire government and corporate assistance to mount a particular competition or tournament. Less popular sports receive less funding.

However, the increased leisure time that people have is a resource which can be tapped if attractive enough package deals (airline, hotel and tickets to games) are made available. Even if a sport is not as popular as, say, cricket or football, the leisure that people have, in the Caribbean and elsewhere, provides an opportunity which can be factored into its marketing strategies. Sports tourism (§13.6) has shown that it has considerable potential to generate

BOX 13.1

Twenty20 (T20) cricket in the Caribbean



Fig. 13.1 West Indies cricketers pose with their trophy at the end of the final T20 match between England and West Indies at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown on March 13, 2014.

Introduced in England and Wales in 2003 as an inter-county competition, the T20 version of cricket gained prominence following its introduction in 2006 in the Caribbean by Allen Stanford. Its potential was quickly seen by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (similar to our WICB) and it took this format of the game to a completely different level. T20 cricket is now taking the cricketing world, as well as the world of sport generally, by storm. Today cricket is ranked third among the most popular sports worldwide (soccer and basketball are ranked first and second, according to www.mostpopularsport.net), probably because of this new exciting format. The T20 version is shorter (each side is allowed 20 overs), in great contrast to the traditional Test Match which takes

three or four days to complete. The glamour and style associated with this format of cricket, reminiscent of the English (soccer) Premier League, have resulted in T20 cricket impacting on not just the game of cricket, but also entertainment and business in regions where the game is played. In the Caribbean as well as in India, a T20 tournament has a variety of performers, akin to cheerleaders, and loud, pounding music in between overs. The media houses pay cricket boards of control huge sums for permission to air the matches, and this is because they know that millions around the globe tune in to these matches and follow the various tournaments closely.

increased income for Caribbean countries. Test matches, One-Day Internationals and the advent of Twenty20 competitions in cricket (see Box 13.1) show how a sport can draw spectators from different countries and generate income. Hosting the Cricket World Cup (see Box 13.2) also raised the profile of West Indian cricket across the world.

◆ **While T20 cricket has enormous appeal for Caribbean people, discuss the possible negative effects which the game has been having on West Indian cricket in general.**

Sport, income and the mass media

To a large extent the profitability of sport is dependent on its links with the mass media who dominate how professional sporting activities are portrayed and in fact influence how successful those activities are. The mass media publicise events across the region, and among the various media houses there is competition to buy the rights to record and broadcast live and taped matches. For cricket, these rights are often worth millions of dollars, which go to the WICB. These monies can be reinvested to develop the sport further through increased salaries for players, better prize

BOX 13.2 The Cricket World Cup 2007

In 2007 the Caribbean hosted the Cricket World Cup, a high-profile international competition, which greatly increased cricket revenues and prompted new venues to be built and old ones refurbished. As a result, games began to be played in venues beyond the traditional cricketing grounds of Bourda (Guyana), Queen's Park Oval (Trinidad and Tobago), Kensington Oval (Barbados), the Antigua Recreation Ground and Sabina Park (Jamaica). Arnos Vale Sporting Grounds (St Vincent), Queen's Park (Grenada), Warner Park (St Kitts and Nevis) and Beausejour Stadium (St Lucia) are among the additional venues enabling more Caribbean people to see the West Indies team play live (see Figs. 13.2 and 13.3). This means higher gate receipts and more profits for the WICB.



Fig. 13.2 Beausejour Stadium, St Lucia



Fig. 13.3 Countries hosting the cricket World Cup of 2007

monies and incentives, buying the services of higher-quality coaches and technical expertise, staging more sporting events and training amateurs and young enthusiasts through clinics and sporting camps.

The mass media, especially cable television, have been able through increasingly sophisticated technical innovations to market the game in ways which the consumer finds exciting and informative. The commentaries, replays (often in slow motion), entertaining graphics, shot selection and the many camera angles give the home viewer a comprehensive and detailed portrayal of the game which a spectator does not normally have. The popularity of home viewing (or sports bars with gigantic screens) therefore competes with the income which the live staging of games could generate. Negotiations between the mass media company buying the rights to air the match and the WICB sometimes result in agreements to show the match as a delayed telecast, or in real time only if the live event is sold out. Recently, large screens mounted in sporting arenas have given spectators a detailed perspective of the live performance similar to what they would have enjoyed at home. Thus, the mass media have promoted the popularity of certain sports by marketing them as a form of 'packaged reality' to an audience of millions. Inadvertently, this threatens the income-generating power of staging the live event for the WICB, as well as for those persons who depend on the event itself for an income – food and drinks vendors, retailers of items with sporting logos and products endorsed by sporting heroes, transport workers and those providing support services (for example, those who maintain the sporting facilities).

Sport, income and employment

The growth of sport for entertainment (elite athletes, high-profile teams) as well as for physical activity (as recreation) has contributed to the generation of both income and employment in the region. For example, professional players receive large salaries and additional income for endorsement contracts, which are taxed by their respective countries, and so too are the profits of the WICB. Less directly attributable to sport are the taxes levied on the annual profits of media houses and other companies, such as those retailing sports goods, among other merchandise.

Coaches and those involved in sports management – from technical experts, nutritionists, personal trainers and instructors to medical personnel and other support staff – represent growing areas of employment. This is likely to continue to grow as the idea of sport as physical activity or recreation important for everyone is promoted. More specialised areas are coming into being – sports medicine, sports psychology and exercise psychology – contributing to a new set of workers in the sports sector. In addition, the building and maintenance of sports stadiums and other infrastructure and facilities provide employment for construction workers and others; the production of sports goods and equipment involves manufacturing, marketing and retailing; the administration of sport and sporting facilities requires managers and clerical workers; and advertising and sports journalism have spawned journals, magazines and websites devoted to sports news and issues, generating a database of particular sports and sports icons.

However, compared to North America and Europe, sports in the Caribbean still have much unrealised potential in generating income. Cricket is the only exception. The fact that there is one regional cricket team means that it has regional support, which is not the case with other sports. Also, cricket is played on a well-travelled international circuit.

Research mini-project

Survey as many journals, newspapers and magazines as you can to see how sport is portrayed in the mass media. Do these print media give the same portrayal as visual media such as TV and the Internet?

13.2.2 The Need for Sponsorship

Sport, whether played for entertainment on a competitive basis or for recreation, needs sponsorship and an infusion

of investment capital. National teams aspiring to compete at the Olympics or other competitions (Box 13.3) often find it difficult to send a fully equipped team abroad. Moreover, in most Caribbean countries there are increasing numbers of athletes, especially in cricket and football, willing to play in domestic clubs on a semi-professional basis, thus deepening the community's involvement in sport and broadening opportunities for many. However, a sports club needs to make a considerable financial outlay: players, coaches and officials have to be paid some level of salary, as do those responsible for maintenance of the grounds and other facilities, and the club also has to pay for the athletes' meals, transport, uniforms and equipment when they travel to participate in competitions.

In competing for the scarce resources of governments or corporate sponsors, some sports are repeatedly sidelined (motor racing, golf, swimming and tennis, sometimes described as 'elite sports'). Nevertheless, even more popular sports such as football (soccer), netball and basketball hardly attract multinational investment capital in Caribbean countries. In fact, many sports are struggling just to schedule annual competitions for various teams and to provide expertise and other forms of assistance to those teams so that they can compete effectively in the round of matches and fixtures. Thus, they can hardly generate income. The funding issue must be tackled, perhaps in novel ways, because sources of assistance from governments and local companies have proven to be inadequate in uplifting sport to a level where it can generate income and contribute to its own development.

ACTIVITY 13.2

1. Investigate to what extent local institutions such as business and government finance or support sport in your country, and which sports tend to benefit.
2. What might be considered 'creative' ways to attract more funding for sport?

The question of sports teams and associations being able to generate income by organising on a business footing is a possible developmental strategy, as well as sourcing multinational sponsorship. The latter, however, depends to a large extent on already being a successful team, with sporting stars capable of giving the multinational company advertising advantages. Thus, although the potential is there for sport to generate income to further its own development, for the time being such potential is not being fully realised.

13.3

Sport for health, fitness and discipline

13.3.1 Health Benefits of Sport

The focus on highly competitive sports for recreation or entertainment obscures the importance of sport as physical activity for the mass of the population. For this to happen more of the citizenry needs to be won over to a lifestyle based on health and fitness. If the demand for sporting facilities and services grows, the income generated should be substantial. Today the price of gym membership and fees for fitness clubs tends to be prohibitive, largely because so few people have lifestyles where sport is a major form of recreation. A policy of promoting sport as physical activity for recreation should

have health and fitness benefits for the population, as well as generating increased income from all the facilities, services and events which are patronised by the public.

The health benefits of keeping physically active are widely known. Lower rates of heart disease, stroke, obesity and osteoporosis are some of the benefits of being physically active. Physical movement leads to the strengthening of bones, muscles and the cardiovascular system. These in turn contribute to greater endurance and physical fitness, enabling the athlete or individual to improve performance. To be able to consistently improve fitness and strength, however, a dietary regimen and lifestyle which enhances good health and well-being must be followed. Thus, sports professionals and those who engage in sport for recreation tend to be vigilant about what they eat, abstain from alcohol and smoking as well as from other drugs and try to organise their lives so that they get enough sleep.

BOX 13.3 Competitive sporting opportunities

For Caribbean athletes wishing to compete at the highest levels, as well as those committed to achieving excellence in a specific sport, there are opportunities to meet, compete with and learn from their colleagues internationally. However, funding remains a problem. Other than governments and corporate sponsors, the sporting association or club to which an athlete belongs finds that it has to enlist the help of NGOs, families and even friends in meeting the costs of sending athletes to attend sporting events abroad. These events, though, are important in the development of athletes and sports in general. For young athletes they provide opportunities for keen competition and for assessing their achievements against the very best athletes regionally and internationally.

The following are some of the more popular events in which Caribbean athletes participate.

- **CARIFTA Games.** Held in a different Caribbean country each year around Easter, these Games are important for the development of young athletes. They offer competitions in two categories – under 17 years and under 20 years. The Games began in 1972 as an important step for young athletes in testing their skill and proficiency and as a training ground for those who would go on to become professional elites in their sport.
- **Commonwealth Games.** Held once every four years, these Games are open to all the countries of the Commonwealth. One of the goals of the Commonwealth Games Federation is to encourage the development of sport and physical recreation throughout the Commonwealth. In 2000 the Commonwealth

Youth Games, open to athletes under 18 years, was instituted, and this presents another opportunity for our young athletes to meet international competitors.

- **Central American and Caribbean Junior and Senior Championships (CAC Games).** These Games are held every other year and give Caribbean athletes an opportunity to compete with their counterparts from Central America. The Junior Championships have sections for athletes under 17 years and those under 20 years. The IAAF is the world governing body for the CAC Games.
- **IAAF World Youth Championships (International Association of Athletics Federation).** This takes place every two years for athletes between 15 and 17 years of age and is an international meet usually dependent on performance at the CARIFTA Games or the CAC Junior Championships.
- **Pan-American Junior Championships.** This is held every two years for track and field athletes aged 19 years and under from across the continent.

Participation in these regional and international competitions must necessarily be an important goal for athletes wishing to strive for excellence in their sport. At such meetings standards of performance are set against which athletes need to measure their performance. Thus, they represent important steps in the careers of Caribbean athletes, but unfortunately the various sporting bodies in the Caribbean cannot afford to give many of their top athletes such an opportunity.

BOX 13.4 Sports and physical education in schools

Psychologists such as Howard Gardner (1983) have put forward theories about human development which suggest that movement is an 'intelligence' similar to linguistic or mathematical intelligence. What he and his colleagues propose is that we are intelligent in different areas, including bodily kinaesthetic intelligence (or movement). Thus, our education should involve training in these 'multiple intelligences' to help us to realise our true potential. In the current system, music (musical intelligence), physical education (bodily kinaesthetic intelligence) and social skills (interpersonal intelligence) in particular become relegated to extracurricular activities.

Gardner says that sports and physical education help individuals to use their bodies in a skilled

way for self-expression and to achieve goals. To be able to dance, take part in dramatic productions, play basketball, exercise or practise mind-body coordination (as in sports or yoga) are examples of displaying bodily or kinaesthetic intelligence (as well as social skills). And this is a necessary part of the development of human beings. That schools are not more aggressive in promoting this intelligence suggests that educators, parents and students themselves rank the intelligences necessary for academic success as mainly linguistic and logico-mathematical knowledge and see the others as having minimal importance. However, if human development is to be an achievable goal of Caribbean countries, then all children should have a full programme of physical activity.

If health benefits are the well-documented outcomes of physical exercise, then we must consider why schools are not more aggressive in promoting physical fitness and sport in the curriculum (Box 13.4). We also need to examine the milieu in which young people are growing up and which influence their participation in sport, exercise and healthy lifestyles (Box 13.5).

Health, though, is a holistic condition which depends not only on physical well-being but also involves the mental and emotional state of the individual. Ongoing research seems to suggest that an exercise programme or involvement in sport helps individuals to achieve lower rates of anxiety and lowers stress levels, perhaps by altering their biochemistry (Scrignar, 1991). Emotional distress is often associated with feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. The achievement a person experiences in even a modest exercise programme, or in playing a sport, seems to result in a feeling of having control over one's life and a sense of mastery over circumstances.

Sport and exercise are also recommended for older and disabled persons. Exercise diminishes the need for costly medical attention in older age. Medical experts say that the circulatory system and the muscles can be trained even after the age of 70. Perceptions that older persons should retire gracefully from life play a large part in preventing them from living full and active lives. They too are likely to accept the limitations which society tends to impose on them. For similar reasons the Special Olympics (and now the Paralympics) were introduced to popularise the idea that persons with disabilities can improve their health, fitness and self-esteem, as well as social skills, by

active participation in sporting events. The needs of the disabled are usually not a priority with governments, so that it is left largely to volunteer organisations to provide opportunities for their continued development. It takes a lot of time, energy and finance for volunteers and supporters to mount qualifying rounds for the Special Olympics. And in some countries that is just not possible.

ACTIVITY 13.3

Recently, the apparent mismatch between sport and its sponsorship by tobacco companies has arisen as a hotly debated issue.

1. Outline the main ideas in this debate.
2. To what extent do you believe that tobacco companies which are also sports sponsors jeopardise the goal of health and fitness for a country?

13.3.2 Discipline and Moral Fitness

One of the benefits of playing a sport is the appreciation the participant develops for a disciplined approach to the game, as well as the cooperation and teamwork necessary for success in many sports. Serious athletes learn to pit themselves against their last best performance in their bid to achieve excellence. It is said that within sport a person can achieve high moral character by observing the spirit of fair play, honesty and endurance which the sport demands. In committing to excellence in performances, in preparing for competition, in winning or losing, an athlete's main concern is how he or she plays the game.

BOX 13.5 Youth and sports

Many studies show that youth participation in sports helps to decrease their involvement in drugs, gangs and smoking and reduces the incidence of dropping out of school or becoming pregnant. However, while there is more interest in and information on sports, health and fitness than ever before, there seems to be declining participation on the part of youth, as well as other groups. In fact, there is an increase in child obesity. Fraser (2003) says that in

the recent Adolescent Health and Fitness Study in Barbados, 18 per cent of the children were already overweight, and many girls were becoming “couch potatoes”. A shocking 20 per cent of girls, compared to 8 per cent of boys, reported no regular physical activity. (p 338)

Various theories have been put forward to try to account for the lack of interest that young people (particularly girls) are showing towards getting involved in sports and exercise programmes. They include the following:

- Many prefer to be spectators, and this is attributed to the sports programmes in schools (particularly high schools) which encourage early specialisation in a particular sport, trying to find suitable school teams for competitions. If a student is not as talented as others, say in netball, and does not make the team, the opportunities for continued exposure to the

sport dwindles to that of being a spectator. There are few examples of vigorous sports programmes in schools for all children. Whether it is conscious or not, school sports are bent on producing the youth sports elite.

- Students, both in high schools and in primary schools (where there is an increase in organised sports for young children), point out that once sport is organised in teams, coached and supervised by adults, it becomes more like work and less like play. The spontaneous, fun-oriented aspect vanishes and the regimen imposed by adults becomes a source of stress. (In the US this is one reason advanced for the popularity of extreme sports – e.g. bungee jumping, skateboarding – which depend on individual effort with the minimum of adult supervision.)

High school students involved in early sport specialisation are often honing their talents towards a particular end. Being able to access a prestigious sports scholarship and a university education is an increasingly popular goal for Caribbean students (see §13.4.1). Others are bent on achieving recognition and representing the country at international meets and even the Olympics. Still others seek the upward mobility that comes with being recruited into foreign professional football clubs. Coaches, parents and teachers tend to collaborate to help these students realise their dreams.

An athlete knows that the highest form of discipline and morale comes from the journey and not necessarily from the finish. Sports, then, have long been promoted as having character-building potential for individuals, depending on how they approach and play the game.

The Olympic Games is undoubtedly the most prestigious international sporting event for most athletes and for the general public. The participants are the best in the world in their field. Its status comes not only from the high quality of the competitors, but also from the respect accorded its ancient beginnings and lofty ideals (Box 13.6). The Olympic movement is based on the understanding that sport (through the experiences of preparation and competition) can lead to healthier and happier individuals and a more peaceful world. It is thus not only about sport itself but the contribution of sport to peace. It does not recognise discrimination among nations or groups and regards all human beings as interconnected.

**SUMMARY**

In a very real way, then, sport and physical exercise have an important role to play in improving the health and fitness of all the people of a country and are therefore central to any development goals which a country might have. However, this ideal is compromised by an education system which pays token attention to holistic development. Schools tend to focus on academic success or even sporting success, minimising the opportunities for all students to be involved in a meaningful programme of physical activity. Older persons and those suffering from disabilities also tend to be sidelined in this area of their development. For sport to make an important contribution to national and regional development it must move beyond its present emphasis on competition and performance enhancement to include ‘sport as physical activity’ for everyone.

BOX 13.6 The Olympic Games: then and now

The Ancient Olympic Games of Greece, originating in 776 BC, honoured the god Zeus, and were therefore a religious event. Like today, the Games were the most important athletic event of the times (though there were three other major athletics championships in the Greek world, held at Delphi, Argos and Corinth). Athletes competed for the honour of their native city-state, although there were no team sports. The winners were treated to accolades similar to those which sports superstars enjoy nowadays. Sums of money as well as the famous laurel wreath were bestowed upon the victors, statues of them were erected in their home cities and songs and poems were created in their honour. During the Games a truce was to be observed and there was a cessation of all hostilities so that athletes could travel in safety.

Also very similar to what obtains today, historical records show that cheating and bribery were common occurrences among rival athletes and the truce was often violated. The Games tended to be dominated by nationalistic fervour, triumphant city-states having a sense of superiority when their athletes won. In ancient Greece the city-states viewed the competitions almost as if they were waging war against each other. Over the centuries in which the Olympics were in existence their religious and athletic ideals were repeatedly dishonoured. In AD393 the Christian Roman Emperor Theodosius abolished the Games, citing them as a form of pagan practice.



Fig. 13.4 Athletes from the ancient Olympics

In 1894, through the tireless efforts of Baron Pierre de Coubertin (a French educator), the International Olympic Committee (IOC) was formed and the modern Olympic Games came into being. A little-known fact is that the IOC Charter envisages sport and the Olympics as a vehicle for promoting values which must be taught. This more recent Olympic tradition is an educational one, seeing sport as a medium through which participants learn to coexist harmoniously with each other, especially

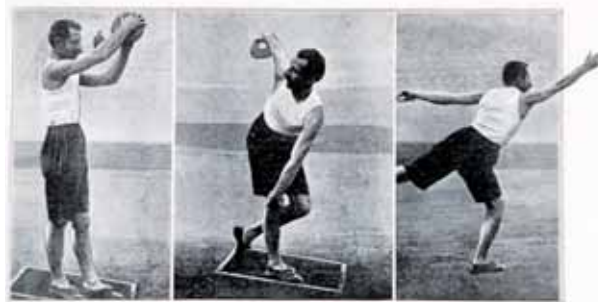


Fig. 13.5 Athletes competing in the 1896 Olympic Games

to coexist harmoniously with each other, especially at international competitions where fairness and goodwill predominate. The IOC Charter is essentially a charter for world peace. The present arrangements and organisation of the Games, then, do not necessarily reflect the traditions and ideals of the ancient Games. The emphasis on ethical principles, unity and peace is the foundation on which the modern Games are based.

Ironically, the reincarnation of the Olympics has seen much in the way of cheating, doping, boycotting, acts of sabotage and terrorism, not to mention political interference and improper conduct of coaches, judges and even IOC members. The commercialisation of the Games is often cited as the major reason why there is so much dishonesty at an event founded on principles of ethics and fair play. One aspect of commercialisation is the valuable prizes which athletes aspire to, even though the Games themselves are strictly amateur competitions with no prize money. The glory of winning an Olympic gold medal is accompanied by the possibility of lucrative endorsement contracts for multinational business interests and promises of houses, large sums of money and national awards from the athletes' home countries. A second aspect of commercialisation is how the media select, package and promote the athletes they decide should be world-class superstars. Athletes are commodified in this way and become highly prized on the market.

Sportspersons, coaches, officials, teachers and players' associations, as well as the general public, recognise the intrinsic worth of the lofty ideals associated with the Olympics. If a serious commitment is made to upholding the Olympic tradition, then sport can make a definite contribution to development. It would provide an

BOX 13.6**The Olympic Games: then and now (continued)**

avenue to display humanitarian attitudes, fairness and justice and nurture a more peaceful society. The fact that the Olympics are held in such high esteem means that people recognise the spirit which imbues this sporting tradition and feel that it should continue to inspire. Since the Games were restarted in 1896 they have been held every four years (except during the two world wars), attesting to a general desire to hold on to something which speaks to an enlightened view of the individual and the promise of a better world.

It is a matter of continued concern, then, that at every Olympics in recent times there has been evidence of banned drug use by athletes and their coaches to achieve higher standards of performance. The dilemma here is that the ideals of the Olympics are not being echoed by present-day values, which applaud winning as everything and any other place as not worthy of mention. Winning at all costs encourages dishonest practices such as taking illegal drugs and engaging in tactics to destabilise a fellow competitor or gain an unfair advantage. Commentators seem to think that the increasing commercialisation of sport, in the US, Canada and Europe especially, turns on the large salaries and lucrative endorsement contracts which athletes earn. The foreign mass media glorify athletes and report on their luxurious lifestyles, and this continued hype encourages aspiring world record holders to use any means necessary to win, because a win earns a chance of becoming eligible for all these rewards.



Fig. 13.6 Olympic athlete Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce from Jamaica

13.4**Educational opportunities**

Demonstrating excellence in a particular sport can help Caribbean students to access higher education, for example via a US sports scholarship (see below). On qualifying, they can attain social mobility, earn more income and use their expertise in improving conditions in whatever line of work they find themselves when they return home.

13.4.1 US Sports Scholarships

The US sports scholarship has emerged in recent years as an alternative path for accessing a university education, not only for poorer students but also for those who associate the scholarship and US universities with more prestige than the local alternatives. To this end the most talented secondary school students in sport routinely

take the SATs to be eligible for US universities and compete as far as possible in meets where scouts from US universities may be present. Thousands of Caribbean students are now studying at universities abroad, whether on full or partial sports scholarships. The US has many avenues through which our students can access funding – grants for underrepresented minorities, grants offered by Caribbean people in the diaspora for those students resident in the US and of Caribbean heritage, and at certain universities grants offered by their international alumni for disadvantaged students from the Caribbean. Local organisations, too, are beginning to offer sports scholarships. For example, the Caribbean Tourism Organization now provides scholarships and study grants for those athletes wishing to study tourism hospitality and languages locally.

A sports scholarship offers a route to a professional career in a particular sport or a career in other disciplines studied at the university. The educational opportunities

which are accessed through this means can result in development for the Caribbean. If the athlete returns to the Caribbean, he or she adds to the cadre of professional talent, either in sport or other areas. People achieving tertiary education are able to earn a fairly high standard of living in the Caribbean. They are also able to contribute to the national good through their expertise in different fields. Even if the athlete continues to live and train abroad (taking advantage of superior training facilities and expertise) but still competes for the Caribbean, his or her success also means fame and glory for the Caribbean, though this does not necessarily help to develop sport locally.

Undoubtedly, the sports scholarship exposes an athlete to training and professional expertise as well as a level of competition which will hardly be found in a small Caribbean country. However, apart from the individual advantage of social mobility and the indirect benefits which may accrue to the country through the growth of an expert and professional class, sport itself may not necessarily profit from the educational opportunities a sports scholarship affords young athletes.

ACTIVITY 13.4

1. Make a list of sports scholarships which are available to school leavers in your country. Do some US universities have a special relationship with particular schools?
2. Outline some of the ways in which a foreign sports scholarship impacts (a) positively and (b) negatively on Caribbean development.

13.4.2 Sports and 'At-risk' Youth

In quite another way sport can contribute to educational opportunities for youth. An active sports programme designed for students and out-of-school youth can set up alternative paths, especially for 'at-risk' youth, which help them to stay in school, refrain from unhealthy practices and even learn marketable skills within a sports programme. In the World Bank (2003) report on Caribbean youth development, the following statements are made (pp xiv, xv):

- Sexual and physical abuse is high in the Caribbean and socially accepted in many Caribbean countries.
- The onset of sexual initiation in the Caribbean is the highest in the world (with the exception of Africa, where early sexual experiences take place within marriage).
- The region has the highest incidence of HIV and AIDS outside of Africa.

- The incidence of rage (serious or uncontrolled anger) among young people is extremely high.
- Youth unemployment is especially elevated in some Caribbean countries.
- In contrast to the United States, which has high levels of youth violence, the proportion of Caribbean adolescent males who carry firearms is extremely high.
- Although data on drug use are scanty, anecdotal evidence suggests a widespread social acceptance of alcohol and marijuana in some Caribbean countries, among both in-school and out-of-school youth.

While now more than ten years old, the problems highlighted by this report are still very much with us. In terms of risk to a society, youth emerges as a liability and not an asset, mainly as a result of **risky behaviours** such

Risky behaviours are those that tend to result in negative outcomes, especially with regard to health.

as drug use, alcohol abuse, involvement in violence, and unwise sexual contacts. These behaviours tend to be correlated in the statistics, for example early sexual activity is often accompanied by gang membership and weapon-carrying; multiple sexual partners, unprotected sex and drug abuse mean that young people are disproportionately at risk for HIV infection.

The World Bank report (2003) states that while youth were not responsible for these problems they were deeply enmeshed in them, causing many to be involved in risky behaviours. Responsibility for these problems lies in the family, where many young people may be physically abused, especially through corporal punishment from an early age, and where parental guidance is not as strong as it should be. In addition, the education system continues to privilege high academic success and does not have adequate programmes designed for children who are intelligent in other areas. Many drop out of secondary schools or, if they continue, are alienated within the system. Dropping out of school, poverty and few options are suggested as possible reasons why youth become involved with drugs and crime as well as early sexual encounters.

Some progress is being made to offer at-risk youth educational opportunities involving sports as a means to overcome negative outcomes. In St Kitts and Nevis, Project Strong has achieved international and regional recognition for its combination of physical activity, computer training and other skills linked to an apprenticeship scheme for out-of-school youth involved in risky behaviours. The project has spread to other Caribbean countries, where the emphasis on

a core sports programme to nurture positive attitudes, discipline and morale seems to be more successful in building confidence and self-esteem than specialised, separate academic or sports programmes. The Healthy Lifestyle Project, originating in Jamaica and spreading across the Caribbean, targeted female youth to become involved in netball as a means for experiencing self-esteem, appreciating healthy living and for learning leadership skills. Today it welcomes males and has grown to accommodate all kinds of sports.

Although these programmes help to build the human development potential of individuals, they also help in national development as the costs of risky behaviours are expensive to the country. The World Bank report (2003, p.xv) provides this list:

- A single cohort of adolescent mothers is estimated to cost society, in terms of foregone benefits from alternative uses of resources, more than US\$2 million in St Kitts and Nevis. (This means that in any year a substantial percentage of the monies to pay for developmental projects has to be diverted to state services to address the needs of young mothers and their children.)
- School leavers in Guyana forgo hundreds of thousands of dollars in net earnings over their lifetimes, costing the state thousands of dollars in lost income. (Paying for a student's education is expensive. A nation does this with the expectation that education will equip an individual with skills to contribute to the country. If a student drops out of school he or she is wasting the money spent by the state on education and personally denying himself or herself the earnings that could have been made over a lifetime.)
- Youth crime and violence in St Lucia generates more than US\$3 million in lost benefits to society and US\$7.7 million in lost benefits to private individuals annually. (The financial costs which the society has to pay for arrests, prosecution and detention could be used for developmental purposes. Private costs to individuals include installing security systems in their homes and cars and upgrading security generally – improved locks, burglar-proofing and guard dogs. In addition, there are other costs such as stolen or destroyed private property, the psychological costs experienced by the victims and the fall-off in tourist flows.)

As an avenue for out-of-school youth to access educational opportunities, sport thus has the potential to contribute to national development by reducing costly risky behaviours. Such programmes, by impacting positively on youth and their choices, also save the country substantial financial costs.



SUMMARY

Sport can increasingly make a contribution to development in the Caribbean through generating income, encouraging health and fitness, promoting a sense of Caribbean identity and nurturing important character traits such as discipline, honesty and perseverance. More recently, for those winning sports scholarships, sport has become an avenue to illustrious careers as sports professionals, or professionals of other kinds. However, the contribution of sport to development remains minimal in the Caribbean because on its own it cannot accomplish the goals of a healthy nation or high morale. In addition, if the society suffers from a great deal of inequity, sport can hardly bring about a more equitable state of affairs. Sport as entertainment may be able to help individuals to achieve success, but sport as physical fitness, organised for national and regional development, can do much more. The problem is that this focus on sport as physical fitness, or sport for all, is not pursued seriously.

13.5

Sport and Caribbean identity

13.5.1 The Importance of Success

Success at sports, particularly competitive sports, is popularly seen as a means towards achieving a common feeling of Caribbean identity. Cricket has been able to do this as most Caribbean countries identify with the West Indies cricket team. A large part of the success of cricket in building a Caribbean identity is due to the fact that it can draw on players from all Caribbean countries. More recently, football has energised supporters as the most important means whereby the Caribbean could earn recognition as a sporting presence on the world scene, even though it may be only a national team achieving such honours.

The successes and failure of the West Indies cricket team, the controversies associated with it, the selection of players and its heroes are all issues which concern and interest Caribbean people across the region, as well as those in the diaspora. There is no single bond that unites Caribbean people so much as cricket. The political philosopher and cricket enthusiast C.L.R. James, in his book *Beyond a Boundary* (1963), suggests that cricket

occupies a unique place in our psyche. It cannot be understood just as a game; it is too closely associated with British rule and colonialism. James sees the Caribbean person as having made a commitment to things British, subconsciously or not. Thus cricket, that very British institution, was not abandoned but rather embraced and ‘West Indianised’, making it into something fiery and ‘better’ than the British version. Besting the British at their own beloved sport has been an important part of our decolonisation process and, as James implies, a performance through which we have been able to find ourselves and develop our capabilities.

The glory days of West Indies cricket seem (at least for the moment) to be mainly in the past, yet Caribbean people remain as interested and involved as ever. To what do you attribute this loyalty?

Where other sports are concerned – such as football, track and field events and swimming – the success of Caribbean athletes representing their individual countries in international competitions has been a source of pride for all Caribbean people. For example, the long and successful history of Jamaica in track and field, second only to the US in the amount of medals won, is an astounding feat given our scarce resources in promoting sport. Football or soccer is widely popular all over the region, and the qualifying matches for the World Cup present a unique opportunity to see the many classes and social groups in Caribbean society feeling a sense of common identity as they cheer on their national football teams (Box 13.7).

Beyond the specific cases of cricket and football, sport in general has been credited with the potential for nation-building, an important part of developing a national identity. One of the reasons for incorporating sports programmes into the curriculum in schools, for example, is to promote unity among diverse peoples. However, schools vary in their ability to provide instruction and experience in the different types of sports. Some schools do not have playgrounds, while others have funding enabling them to buy a school bus to transport their athletes. We have already noted the marginalisation of those who display little sporting prowess and how they tend to be excluded from sport or exercise programmes. In addition, it is mainly the well-to-do who can afford the extra tuition, coaching clinics and the costs of competing abroad for their children who show sporting talent. Sport can do little to bridge the gap between the haves and the have-nots and cannot be a force for nation-building if socioeconomic groups

remain apart in the schools they attend and if they have access to different types of infrastructure – swimming pools, clinics, available transport and training facilities.

ACTIVITY 13.5

Reflect on the role sports play in development in your country. If any of your sports teams is victorious at any regional or international competition, to what extent does that contribute to nation-building, and why?

The irony of our sports-crazy world is that the notion of sport being purveyed is one which has been created, packaged and disseminated by the mass media. Many Caribbean people watch NBA basketball on television. The camera angles, the music, the interjections by the commentators, the audience reactions, the replays and the clips on individual athletes are all carefully designed to portray these athletes as larger than life, as superheroes. The portrayal of violence in North American ice hockey is particularly gruesome and alarming, in that so many people seem to enjoy it. The orchestrated television version of games and the coverage of violence in sport are all calculated to appeal to the sports spectator's desire for fast-paced action, confrontation, aggression, hostility, a war of words or even fights, which perk up interest in the game.

The media influence even the Olympic Games. Their broadcasting fees contribute enormously to meeting the costs of staging the Games and the IOC tends to accommodate American television networks in the scheduling of events. The sheer size of the television viewing audience for an Olympic event makes a fortune for the mass media in terms of advertising and the broadcast rights they sell to other companies.

While sports in the Caribbean are not as commercialised as in North America and Europe, the fact remains that the foreign mass media hold great sway over Caribbean audiences who regularly tune in to basketball and other games. The icons of the American sports world are everywhere in the Caribbean, not only on television but also on posters, billboards, caps, T-shirts and magazines. Today ‘sport’ in the Caribbean is conceived largely as competitive sports and as a means of promoting the Caribbean on the world scene, a source of national or regional pride. That pride comes from winning and from world recognition of Caribbean athletes. The notion of sport for character-building and for health and fitness seems to have lost out against the more popular image of sport as entertainment.

BOX 13.7**Sports: presence on the world scene**

Many people have commented on the power of sports, especially football, to foster a sense of almost national hysteria when qualifying matches are near, particularly those for the soccer World Cup. Although cricket is much loved and has a long tradition in the Caribbean, the kind of hype and national jubilation or depression which follows an international match involving the national football team seem quite unique to football. Commentators have also remarked on the apparent feeling of oneness among the various ethnicities in a country as they prepare to cheer on their national football team and cite the ability of sports to integrate the country.

When Trinidad and Tobago's football team qualified for the World Cup finals in Germany in 2006, several fans tried to explain why there is this obsession with football and its apparent power to unite the public. Here are some of their opinions:

- There is a tremendous love for the sport but the opportunities to witness live first-class soccer only come to the Caribbean when an international competition is at hand; local club teams do not display the level of skill and performance which an international meet provides. So there will always be enthusiasm, excitement and sell-out matches when this happens.
- Rallying around any national team is a normal occurrence. However, support for the national football team even involves persons who are usually uninterested in sports. This is because football is possibly the most popular sport in the world and any participation by the national team in international matches means that the Caribbean is staking a claim for international attention.
- This could be put another way. It is about 'respect'. All nations want their country to be acknowledged as a presence on the world scene. Football more than any other sport (even cricket) has the potential to bring a Caribbean country into the spotlight with the whole world as an audience. There is, then, this striving for respect, to be accepted with world acclaim, overcoming the constraints of small size, few resources and a history mired in bondage and oppression.

The anxiety and national hysteria that attends a qualifying round of the World Cup in the Caribbean, then, has to do perhaps with this hankering for recognition as a presence on the world scene. Any unity of class, colour and creed that one notices at these times is a temporary lapse in the ordinary state of affairs, because whether the team wins or loses, social stratification remains unaffected.

The emphasis on winning and the commercialisation of sport, largely through the mass media, thus pose a dilemma to the school of thought which promotes sport as having the potential to nurture character-building qualities such as discipline, honesty and fair play, as well as toleration and peaceful coexistence. In this dilemma we witness one of the major problems of development – the pull or lure of riches transcending moral principles. An emphasis on material wealth, fame and glory promotes an attitude of winning at all costs. This mires the Olympics and other championships in controversy after controversy over doping scandals and incidents of cheating. All this plays directly to the media, which get considerable commercial mileage out of reporting these incidents as they unfold. Sport as a means of contributing to the moral development of Caribbean persons, then, is being jeopardised by the increasing importance of the foreign media in influencing how sport is portrayed.

13.5.2 International Recognition

International sport can bring international recognition not only to individual competitors and athletes but also to the countries from which they come. As we have seen, the enormous success of Jamaican sprinters in Olympic and World Championships not only brings celebrity status to those athletes but also showcases Jamaica as a nation.

Similarly, with all the publicity surrounding T20 cricket events, Caribbean cricketers have been able to shine on a world stage. They are now household names in India and Pakistan because T20 is club cricket and many teams, in the IPL particularly, field Caribbean players as well as those from other cricketing nations such as England, Australia and New Zealand. Kieran Pollard, Dwayne Bravo, Sunil Narine, Chris Gayle and Darren Sammy are among the most famous Caribbean players who are members of different clubs in the IPL.

13.6

Sports tourism

Sports tourism is still an emerging market in the

Sports tourism refers to international visitors who travel to a sporting event as either spectators or participants.

Caribbean but is a growing niche area in the tourism product.

The Caribbean has intensified its range of pleasure sports so that there is a growing market for water sports. Water sports contribute a great deal of income to certain Caribbean countries which have the typical calm blue sea maintained by offshore reefs. Waves break outside on these reefs and a lagoon is created between the shore and the reefs. This is often the site for surfing, sailing, parasailing, kayaking, jet skiing and waterboarding. Further out to sea, scuba diving, game fishing and powerboat racing take place. On certain stretches of coast where there are powerful waves, international surfing competitions are held. Water sports are more of an attraction in island destinations – the low-lying coastline of Guyana with three or four large estuaries, for example, does not lend itself to these kinds of activities. The tourists are those who want to take part in these sports, mainly as a leisure pursuit. Their main expenditure will be on renting equipment, buying food or eating out at local restaurants and hiring expert help and tuition in the sport.

Adventure tourism combines physical activity and contact with nature for international visitors. Many adventure tourism activities could also be classed as pleasure sports. For example, mountaineering, rock climbing, whitewater rafting, hang-gliding, paragliding and cycling. They require a certain level of skill and expertise and so guides and trainers can earn money teaching tourists who want to learn a sport to improve their proficiency. Rock climbing is fairly popular on the Pitons in St Lucia, scuba diving occurs throughout the Caribbean and there are various types of eco-adventures.

What types of eco-activity can be considered to be sports tourism?

However, sports tourism also occurs when there is a major sporting event held in the Caribbean such as a Test Match, World Cup cricket finals, CAC Games, golf tournaments or other athletics championships. Here the spectator is the tourist, not the sportsperson. These

tourists stay in hotels near the sports venue, pay for tickets and transport to and from the venue and buy food in restaurants and fast food outlets. They may also shop for souvenirs to take home with them.

This is a new area or niche in Caribbean tourism and as yet there are no clear guidelines or policies linking sports and tourism. The ministries in various Caribbean countries keep sports and tourism ventures separate. Whatever linkages appear now are ad hoc and result from the foresight of a few entrepreneurs and pioneers. There are many lost opportunities because those who organise sporting meets and tournaments do not fully grasp the potential of sports to draw the international visitor, especially if it is marketed properly.



Fig. 13.7 Hiking: sports tourism in the Caribbean



Wrap Up

In this chapter the contribution of sport to development in the Caribbean has been explored, including its impact on the human development potential of citizens. A major component of human development is equity, and sport has the potential to equalise opportunities for many and contribute to a fair and a just society. To a large extent more people are involved and interested in sport than hitherto, but sport itself is structured to promote a view of it as entertainment, greatly aided by the mass media, whereas a view of sport as recreation or physical activity would do much more for human development.

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Research TOPICS

A number of suitable topics for research arise from a study of the contribution of sport to regional development. For example:

1. Examine the relationship between sport and the generation of income. Collect some data on recent income generation from sports. You could include:
 - receipts for media rights to sporting events;
 - profits made by print media reporting on and analysing sporting events and sports celebrities;
 - receipts from ticketing at major cricketing venues (especially for matches involving extra-regional teams, such as international T20 cricket matches, etc.);
 - payments to sportspersons for participating in events outside the region (e.g. professional soccer players from the Caribbean who play for clubs in Europe or the US, Caribbean cricketers in the IPL, or performance payments on the European circuit for elite athletes such as Usain Bolt or Kirani James);
 - receipts from sports tourism and tourism related to major sporting events held in the region;
 - profits from manufacturing sports-related products;
 - income from employment in sports-related industries including coaching and administration.
2. Assess the influence of the media on sport. Possible areas of research include:
 - the creation of celebrity sportsmen and women;
 - commercialisation;
 - pressure for excellence leading to use of drugs and/or injury to the sportsperson;
 - publicity (leading to increased ticket sales) for sports events.

Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Distinguish between sport and recreation. (2 marks)
- (b) Describe TWO ways in which participating in sport can be physically beneficial to an individual. (4 marks)
- 2 (a) Suggest TWO goals for a sports programme in schools. (2 marks)
- (b) For EACH of these goals, outline ONE strategy a school might adopt in order to achieve them. (4 marks)
- 3 (a) Identify TWO areas of self-discipline associated with taking part in sport. (2 marks)
- (b) Describe TWO ways in which sport can be used as a vehicle to promote individual discipline and morale in society as a whole. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) Explain why the term 'level playing field' is used in relation to sport. (2 marks)
- (b) Outline TWO ways in which sport can increase equity in Caribbean societies. (4 marks)
- 5 (a) Define the term 'sports tourism'. (2 marks)
- (b) Give TWO reasons why sports tourism is not well developed in the Caribbean. (4 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

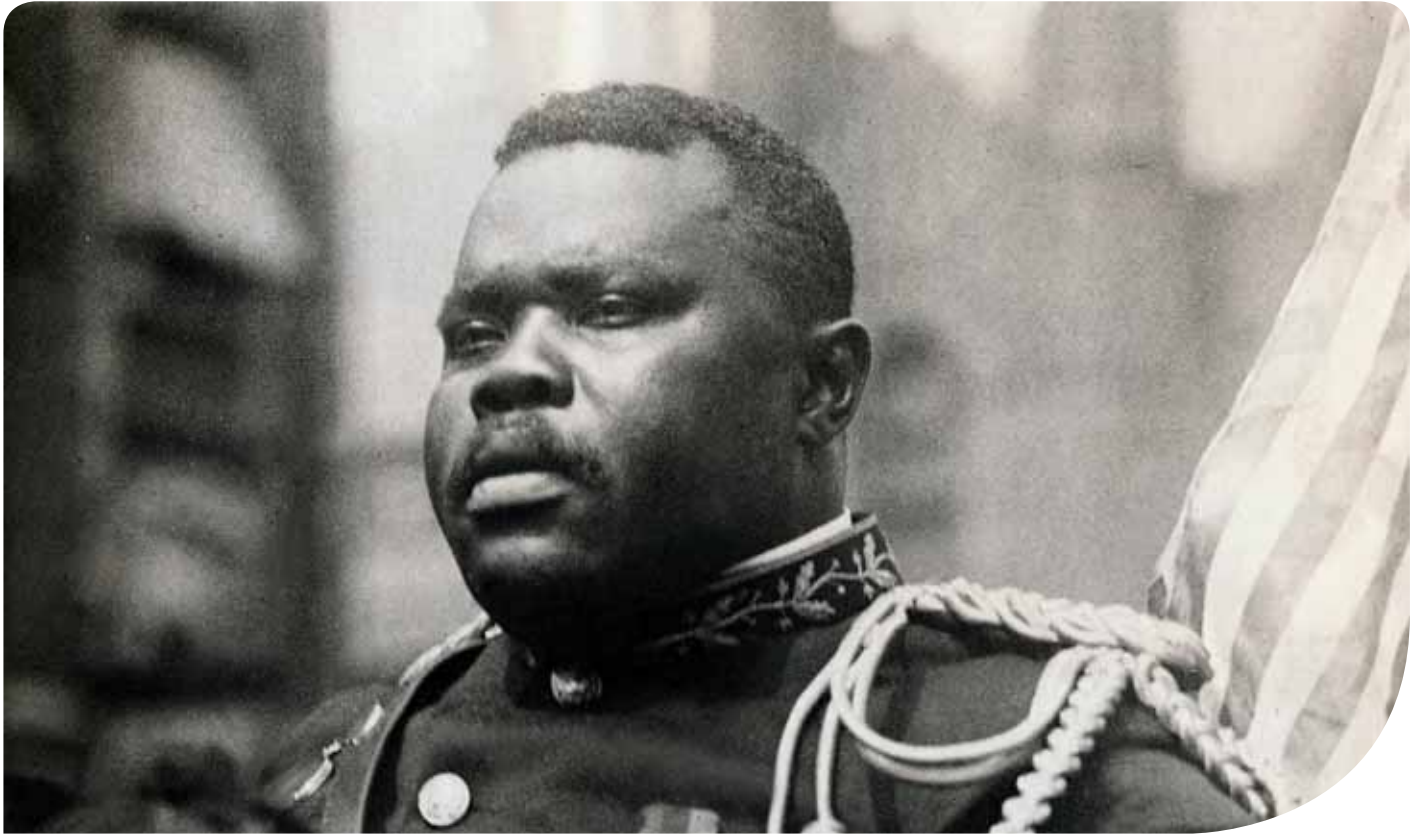
- 1 Discuss the possible reasons why sport as entertainment is a more popular view than sport as physical activity among Caribbean people.
- 2 Explain why cricket is the only sport in the Caribbean to have a regional team and suggest what implications this may have for other sports.
- 3 Describe how sports are influenced by the mass media in the Caribbean.
- 4 Assess the contribution made by sport to human development in the Caribbean.

Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 'If sports are supposed to be ensuring equity, why are women's sports still treated as inferior to men's?' Assess the claims being made in this question.
- 2 Examine TWO key issues which should be included in any national plan to develop sport in the Caribbean.
- 3 'A Caribbean football team would stand a better chance of attracting international corporate investment and be a stronger candidate for World Cup success than those following the practice of fielding individual national teams'. Examine the implications of this statement.

14

Caribbean Intellectual Traditions



Marcus Mosiah Garvey

In this chapter we examine certain bodies of thought or *intellectual traditions*. They are usually referred to as ideologies which have shaped Caribbean development. An ideology is a set of strong beliefs about how social life can be improved. They tell us what is considered acceptable or not acceptable in how we think about certain questions – white superiority, male domination, capitalism, industrialism, native society, and so on. Some ideologies are contested – for example, capitalism versus Marxism – and so offer alternative ideas for development. Some ideologies are mainstream and others marginal – for example, European traditions as opposed to those of indigenous peoples. When a group commits to an ideology and begins to write, act and analyse social life according to that ideology's ideas, an intellectual tradition is formed. This has implications for development because a view or ideological position is being put forward to stimulate thought about the right way of doing things.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. describe the values underlying a number of Caribbean ideologies and intellectual traditions;
2. identify the key thinkers in each of these intellectual traditions;
3. analyse the impact of each of these ideologies on Caribbean development.

14.1

Ideology

As we have seen, to have an ideological position is to have a set of values, or world view, which justify thinking and acting in a certain way. Ideologies are important because they address problems and issues and therefore focus on improvement or development. They also signal to us what other groups think is important and therefore give us an insight into how others may be perceiving disadvantages. Pan-Africanism, for example, takes the position that survivals of Africa in the diaspora should be studied and active links made to Africa as the motherland. The Back to Africa movement is a value position for black people in thinking about development. We studied the effect of ideologies on globalisation in Chapter 11.

The ideologies studied in this chapter have given rise to social movements which try to right some wrong in society. As a result, their programmes for action recommend political change. Whether it is Marxism or neo-Marxism, Indo-Caribbean or feminist thought, for any ideology to develop fully into an intellectual tradition which has developmental potential and recommends political change, it must relate to the Caribbean context and deal with those conditions which shaped our society – primarily our experience of colonialism, exploitation, ethnocentrism and nationalism.

It is important to recognise that ideologies relate to certain practices and ways of thinking followed by some people even when they did not know of a label to describe their ideas. The term ‘pan-Africanism’ is one which is applied with hindsight. The various movements in the late nineteenth century whereby Africans in the New World sought to learn more about Africa and called for the repatriation of Africans were not labelled at the time as the ideology of pan-Africanism. They were expressing certain ideas about development which other people took

up and formulated in their own way. Later these ideas were deemed important to a larger body of people and became organised as a systematic ideological position.

When ideologies move from the stage where certain practices are followed by some people with regard to how they negotiate the world to the stage of being given a name and a description, they become *idealised*. They take on strong overtones about what is acceptable or not, what is good and right, what is possible and what is not. In this form they can be discussed and debated and their implications for development explored with greater ease than when they were the personal convictions of a few. Thus, pan-African ideas existed long before they became a coherent body of thought associated with ‘founding fathers’ and various ‘movements’.

All ideologies claim that they are putting forward a path to ‘freedom’, even if they are opposed to each other. They all claim liberation from some inhibiting condition. For example, capitalism sees freedom as reducing the control of business by governments and other bodies which try to restrict the market. Marxism sees freedom in a society where business and industry come under complete social control and so the workers are free from being exploited. A pan-Africanist wants to liberate black people, while Indo-Caribbean thought sees Indians in the Caribbean as being in an inferior position in a dominant Afro-Caribbean society. Indigenous peoples see their survival in retaining the culture of their ancestors, and feminists see a male-dominated society as hindering the interests of women. Thus, each ideology puts forward a ‘grand theory’ of how we should understand the world; but as postmodernists say, no one theory can fully explain the world. In fact, an ideological stance tends not to accept other world views, only those which are congruent in some way with its main beliefs. We should also keep in mind that some ideologies offer ways of understanding the world which tend to be *utopian* (an unreachable ideal).

14.2

Afro-Caribbean thought

14.2.1 Pan-Africanism

This movement began in the eighteenth century in sporadic acts by African people in North America trying to get back to Africa. It showed their conviction that they were in the wrong place, a place to which they had been brought illegally, and they now wanted to go 'home'. The ideas which eventually developed into pan-Africanism were spearheaded in the early twentieth century by people in the African diaspora, notably from the Caribbean and North America. Over time the emphasis on certain ideas changed but the foundation values continued.

In 1900 Henry Sylvester Williams, a lawyer from Trinidad, educated in England and the US, convened the first pan-African conference in London. At that conference gathered a collection of like-minded people of African origin, mainly from the Caribbean, the US and Britain. Over the years they continued the tradition of organising pan-African conferences and founded newspapers and organisations to promote their thinking about a better world for African people. Although their ideas about pan-Africanism were similar, they disagreed on how to achieve

their objectives. Their main objectives were:

- to promote the view that black people, wherever they lived, had a bond which united them;
- to raise the consciousness of African people (and others) about the humanity, culture, civilisation and history of Africa;
- to free Africa from the political and economic control of Europeans (see Box 4.1);
- to seek justice for black people;
- to promote black pride, black consciousness and black nationalism;
- to repatriate Africans back to Africa, their motherland;
- to seek the unification of the entire African continent under African rule.

Many Caribbean people, including the Jamaican Marcus Mosiah Garvey (Box 14.2), Nevisian Cyril Briggs and Jamaican Claude McKay (Box 14.3) and Trinidadians George Padmore (Box 14.4) and C.L.R. James (Box 14.10), as well as African-Americans such as W.E.B. Du Bois (Box 14.5), were involved in establishing the movement in the early twentieth century. By the 1940s the leadership had passed from Caribbean and African-Americans to African scholars and patriots. Chief among them were Kwame Nkrumah (Box 14.1) and Jomo Kenyatta, who went on to become heads of state in Ghana and Kenya respectively.

BOX 14.1

Africa and the pan-African movement

Kwame Nkrumah (1908–1972) followed a path similar to those of Cyril Briggs and George Padmore (Boxes 14.3 and 14.4). Like them he emigrated to the US to study and became active in the social and political issues of the time. He was from the Gold Coast in West Africa, a region ruled by Britain which today is known as Ghana. In 1944 he went to London where he met Padmore and C.L.R. James (Box 4.10), both Trinidadians and committed pan-Africanists. He was later to say of Padmore that he knew when he met him he had met a kindred spirit. In fact, the young Nkrumah became a protégé of Padmore's. They were all instrumental in staging the pan-African conference held in Manchester in 1945 presided over by W.E.B. Du Bois (Box 14.5), where Africans began to take the lead in advancing the objectives of pan-Africanism.

Nkrumah, under the guidance of Padmore, returned to Ghana and campaigned for independence. After many conflicts with the British authorities, including a stint in prison, Nkrumah achieved prime ministerial status of the first black African country to win its

independence from Britain. However, he worked tirelessly for the freedom of other African countries as well. Pan-Africanists believed that the independence of Ghana would only be complete when all African countries were free. To this end, Padmore was given responsibility within the Ghanaian government to establish a pan-African secretariat to work for African independence from the European imperial powers, and after that to work for the political unity of all Africa. Unfortunately, the various countries (black, Arab and white South Africa) were more interested in winning national independence than being a part of a united Africa.

The fact that a Caribbean national was instrumental in beginning the process of bringing colonialism to an end in Africa was not lost on Caribbean people. The example of a Caribbean national working high up in the Ghanaian government to further the cause of pan-Africanism was a motivating force for pan-Africanists working for Caribbean independence.

BOX 14.2

Marcus Mosiah Garvey

Marcus Garvey was born in 1887 in St Ann's, Jamaica, and had to leave school at an early age to work. He became involved in printing, the newspaper business and politics. As early as 1914 he started the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in Jamaica because his ideas were always about improving the lot of the poor black people. When he migrated to the US he founded a chapter of the UNIA which grew so rapidly that it became the headquarters of the movement. He tirelessly formed other organisations such as the African Communities League (ACL) and the Universal African Black Cross Nurses to address the social and economic needs of the black underclass. His Black Star Line was an ambitious project of transporting people and goods to Africa and was a symbol of black commercial success.

Through his newspapers – the *Negro World*, the *Blackman* and the *New Jamaican* – he attempted to raise the consciousness of African people and to preach about the freedom of African countries which were under colonial rule and the unification of Africa in a similar way to that of the US. His ideas and message came at a time when in both the US and the Caribbean there was economic hardship, hitting the poor in particular. His public appearances were dramatic, colourful affairs accompanied by marches, with the UNIA membership in uniform, bands and a slogan proclaiming the beauty of the black race, the brotherhood of all black people and that black

people should see God in their own image. This kind of effrontery was unheard of in the US in the 1920s and 1930s and it was quickly embraced by those marginalised in a white-dominated, capitalist society.

In the 1930s in Jamaica it was also adopted by the Rastafarian brethren, who interpreted his words to mean the existence of a black god. His advocacy of repatriation to Africa was taken up wholeheartedly by the Rastafarian community (for more on the Rastafari see Box 8.3). However much he used imagery from the Bible, Garvey was not interested in a religious interpretation of the return to Africa. His pan-African ideas were mainly about improving the social and economic circumstances of black people.

Marcus Garvey was undoubtedly the greatest single influence on the pan-African movement, which evolved later into different strands, all acknowledging in some way his call for the 'redemption of African people'. His successful mobilising skills resulted in the spread of the pan-African movement through UNIA. There were chapters in the US, Canada, the Caribbean, Europe and Africa, rallying African people on a scale which was unsurpassed. He was a fiery, charismatic figure who dressed in military uniforms with helmet and plumes, and his supporting organisations, such as the Black Cross Nurses, also wore uniforms. He sought to provide meals, education and jobs for black people as well as to inform them about black pride through the *Negro World* newspaper, which was read by thousands of people on both sides of the Atlantic. He was remarkably successful in establishing a number of organisations which sought to give African-Americans health and social services denied them by American society.

Garvey criss-crossed the Atlantic between the Caribbean, the US and Europe and his fame and popularity grew. Although his was a grassroots organisation, the other pan-Africanists at the time, notably W.E.B. Du Bois (with whom he had differences, and who was an outstanding academic), had to give credit to Garvey's uncompromising stand that he was equal to any white man. He was an inspiration as well for later generations of pan-Africanists, and he had a direct impact on the Rastafari movement, where his ideas live on. He died in 1940.

A national hero of Jamaica, Garvey lives on in the reggae music made famous by Bob Marley and in the inspiration which his tremendous work gave to budding politicians, trade union leaders, the civil rights movement in the US, black power advocates and the decolonisation movement in the Caribbean and Africa, which was based on black nationalism.



Fig. 14.1 Marcus Garvey

BOX 14.3 Cyril Briggs and Claude McKay

Cyril Briggs, a native of Nevis, was born in 1887. He later moved to the US where he formed a black radical organisation called the African Blood Brotherhood (ABB) in 1919. Like Garvey, Briggs was involved in the newspaper business. *The Crusader* was the paper of the ABB, where he wrote about black nationalism, independence for African colonies and economic development for Africans. The social context in the big American cities was one of entrenched poverty for black workers and racial segregation. He advocated that African groups arm themselves for self-defence. There were even ABB groups within UNIA chapters, showing that Briggs supported Garvey's work, and he took part in the conferences organised by Garvey in New York in 1920 and 1921.

However, Briggs came to see that the pan-African philosophy of black nationalism would not be able to succeed within the capitalist system in the US. He observed that capitalism was the fundamental cause of the poverty and oppression faced by black people. In this respect he differed from Garvey, who felt that, with support and initiative, Africans could establish an economic system to rival that of the whites. The ABB eventually became an arm of the Communist Party in the US. At this point we see a palpable difference

from Garvey: Briggs was now outlining ideas based on class rather than race, and this meant that both white and black workers were seen as being oppressed.

Briggs, an ardent supporter of pan-Africanism, also became the first black leader of the US Communist Party. This shows how the initial ideas of Garvey were found to be workable within another kind of ideology altogether – communism. There were many pan-Africanists who followed this lead, believing that working for the emancipation of the black underclass could not come about within a capitalist system.

Claude McKay (1890–1948), the celebrated Jamaican writer of *Banana Bottom*, was also an associate of Briggs, a member of the ABB and a committed communist. He had travelled to Russia in 1922, where he addressed the Third Communist International in Moscow. He was an activist in the US, where he edited newspapers and wrote about the plight of black Americans. He also wrote poetry and was a prolific author. He was given the title 'Father of the Harlem Renaissance'. (The Harlem Renaissance is the name given to a period in the US when black artists were being recognised for their abilities, and Claude McKay's works were recognised as being a major influence on these artists.)

BOX 14.4 George Padmore

Malcolm Nurse was born in Trinidad in 1901. He attended university in the US, where he joined the Communist Party and used the name George Padmore in covert operations. In 1929 Padmore went to Russia to study communism first-hand. He became the secretary of the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers (ITUC-NW), whose main aim was to undermine colonial control in Africa. He founded the *Negro Worker*, an organ of the communist negro movement, to agitate and mobilise the black working class. The Russian leadership used pan-Africanists such as W.E.B. Du Bois and Padmore to spread communist ideas in Africa, North America and the Caribbean. But whereas the pan-Africanists were interested in overthrowing the colonial authorities, the Russians were more interested in converting Africans to communism. Padmore's attraction to communism was based on it being blind to race – all workers were equal, according to the ideology.

However, by 1933 the Russian leader Josef Stalin

found it necessary to cut down on his anti-colonial activities because of the rise of a fascist threat in Europe. Adolf Hitler in Germany and Benito Mussolini in Italy (both opposed to communism) posed an immediate threat to the USSR. The ITUC-NW was disbanded because Stalin felt that such a decision would make European powers more likely to help him in the case of a fascist offensive. Padmore resigned from the party in disgust and turned his attention to other ways of bringing an end to colonialism in Africa.



Fig. 14.2 George Padmore arriving at the White House in 1956

ACTIVITY 14.1

4. Read through Boxes 14.1 to 14.5 and assess the importance of the individuals mentioned
 - a. to pan-Africanism;
 - b. to the development of Caribbean thought.
3. Conduct some independent research on Edward Blyden, a native of St Thomas who became a Liberian citizen and an ardent pan-Africanist in the early years of the movement. Write a biography of him similar to those of Garvey and Du Bois in Boxes 14.2 and 14.5.

Peaceful protest, Marxism and militancy in the United States

A Trinidadian, Stokely Carmichael (Box 14.6), became one of the leaders of the Black Panthers. Carmichael originally belonged to the civil rights movement but broke with Martin Luther King's policy of peaceful non-violence to embrace the more militant route of black power, as preached by Malcolm X. They viewed the struggle as a war and vowed to use any means necessary to ensure that African-Americans be allowed to form their own institutions, to enjoy the same rights as other citizens and to establish their own communities and schools.

BOX 14.5

W.E.B. Du Bois

William Du Bois was born in 1868 in Massachusetts in the US. He was gifted with academic ability and managed through the contributions of family, friends and scholarships to be educated at some of the premier educational institutions in the land. He is reputed to have been the first black person to graduate with a PhD from Harvard. All his scholarly efforts, though, were bound up in trying to understand the plight of black people. His first-hand experience of racism made him determined to study and analyse the living and working conditions of black Americans. His book published in 1903, *The Souls of Black Folk*, and his other publications are still used by historians and sociologists today.

Du Bois was a founder member of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), an interracial organisation formed in 1909, and editor for over 25 years of its official magazine, *The Crisis*. He wrote stinging criticisms of the social and economic system of the day which allowed racism and the marginalisation of black people to be a normal part of life. His goal was to awaken white and black people to the injustice being heaped upon

black Americans. His was one of the first voices to be raised in protest for black Americans. He did not approve of Garvey's grassroots organisation, with its mass popular appeal, largely because it was so different from his own intellectual style. However, Garvey's UNIA and the NAACP were the two leading black associations of the day, and today the NAACP and *The Crisis* live on.

A trip to Africa convinced Du Bois that his fight for black Americans could not be done in a vacuum. He had to embrace a wider conception of the problem affecting the race as a whole. For Africans to be free, they should be free everywhere. With that realisation he really began to follow the ideology of the pan-African movement as espoused by Garvey, Padmore and later Nkrumah. He attended the first pan-African conference in 1900 convened by Henry Sylvester Williams and was the main organiser of many of the conferences thereafter, including the famous one of 1945.

Another trip, to Russia in 1927, served to convince Du Bois that the problem of poverty could not be addressed within the capitalist system. He studied the works of Marx and Engels and became converted to communism as an ideology which held much promise in opposing the current oppressive system in which blacks lived and worked. Communism was opposed to colonialism, and so was pan-Africanism. He became less and less convinced that the civil rights movement in the US being led by Dr Martin Luther King and others was going about the business of 'black redemption' in the right way, and many in turn shunned him because of his communist leanings, which were considered 'un-American'. Some of the pan-African conferences he chaired specifically explored how Marxism and pan-Africanism could work together.



Fig. 14.3
W.E.B. Du Bois

BOX 14.6 Stokely Carmichael and Black Power

Stokely Carmichael (or Kwame Toure) was born in Trinidad in 1941. His family migrated to the US and he went to Howard University, where he became the chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), one of the main organisations of the American civil rights movement. The members were of all races and sought to project the issue of racism into the national arena by sitting down in cafeterias in areas reserved for whites and also in stores. They were harassed and abused by whites and the police. Many went to jail, but they did not resist. They engaged in the famous (or infamous) Freedom Rides, where volunteers boarded buses bound for the Deep South, where segregation was the order of the day everywhere, including bus stations. On one of those rides Carmichael was arrested when he entered a waiting room reserved for whites. The rides were marked by violence and mass arrests as the action drew the attention of the nation.

Carmichael began to invoke black power in his speeches and joined the Black Panthers, a Marxist organisation. The Panthers wanted the means of production owned by the whites to be based in the community, housing and land to be made into cooperatives owned by the people, and an education system to teach people about themselves, their culture and their identity. As the Black Panthers moved more and more towards a black militant organisation ready to use violence to support their revolutionary cause (to establish economic, social and political equality of blacks), the civil rights movement distanced itself. However, Carmichael's understanding of black power was based on the thinking of Malcolm X, which did not allow coalitions with white people, while the

Panthers as Marxists worked with white radicals. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) under J. Edgar Hoover saw the organisation as the single most important threat to the stability of the US. The Black Panthers eventually became a spent force as the FBI infiltrated the organisation, made mass arrests and assassinated key members.

In 1967 Carmichael visited Africa and later became convinced that black liberation could not come about without closer links with Africa. He settled in Guinea, where under the influence of the now exiled Ghanaian leader, Nkrumah, he deepened his efforts to spread pan-Africanism. He changed his name to Kwame Toure (after Nkrumah and Guinean leader Ahmed Sekou Toure). He helped to form the All-African People's Revolutionary Party (AAPRP) in 1972, calling for the unification of Africa.

Carmichael died in Guinea in 1998; in his lifetime he had been a civil rights activist, a black power revolutionary and a pan-Africanist.



Fig. 14.4 Stokely Carmichael

Pan-Africanism in the British Caribbean

Pan-Africanism, in all its various forms, also impacted upon the Caribbean. In the interwar years (1918–1939) there was growing discontent with colonial control and worsening economic conditions. The newspapers of Marcus Garvey found their way to all Caribbean countries (even though they were banned in some, including Trinidad). Cuba had about 50 UNIA chapters, Trinidad 30 and Jamaica 10. In the British Caribbean in the 1930s there were widespread strikes, riots and the growth of trade unions. The dispossessed were attracted to the rhetoric of black empowerment which they read

about in Garvey's newspapers. To the lower classes, then, the struggle for bread merged into one desiring the downfall of colonialism, a growing consciousness of unity and black nationalism.

In this period there was a surge of nationalist sentiments. It coincided with the end of the First World War and the return of Caribbean soldiers who had fought for the British. They had had a chance to understand politics on a much wider stage than at home and had experienced racial discrimination within the ranks of the British armed forces. The rhetoric of the pan-African movement served to mobilise nationalist sentiments and deepen

the decolonisation movement. Caribbean people were intensely interested in Africa, perhaps more so than today.

Italy's attempts to invade and annex Ethiopia in 1935, leading to the fall of the capital, Addis Ababa, and the exile of Emperor Haile Selassie, caused widespread concern and anger in the Caribbean. It was a naked act of aggression on one of the few remaining independent states in Africa. A minor border dispute with Italian-held Somalia was all the excuse Benito Mussolini, the Italian dictator, needed to invade (Fig. 14.5). Mussolini's intent was to build a large empire similar to those of Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, Germany and Belgium in Africa. By annexing Ethiopia he would be able to link the two Italian-held territories of Eritrea and Somalia into a large Italian African empire. This angered Caribbean people in general, not only Rastafarians. In Trinidad dock workers refused to unload Italian ships and in other Caribbean countries young men tried to enlist in the Ethiopian army.

Pan-African sentiments again swept the Caribbean in the late 1960s and 1970s when the region was caught up in the messages of Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael about black power (Box 14.6). It again coincided with a period of

economic downturn. The 'industrialisation by invitation' policy (see §14.3.1) of the newly independent Caribbean countries was not delivering on its promises and there was widespread unemployment. The economy was largely controlled by foreign-owned multinational companies. Black power analysts felt that the black intelligentsia and governments had failed the people. The British colonial overlords, they said, had merely been replaced by a black elite who feathered their nests and did little for the poor. They felt that Caribbean governments had to be more sensitive to the economic empowerment of black people and less involved with ethnocentric ideas. Moreover, governments should enable the people to better appreciate their African heritage and their links to the continent of Africa – a whole experience of history, culture and thought, and an economic goldmine yet untapped – which was ignored in education and social life.

The movement had lasting consequences for the Caribbean. Walter Rodney (see Box 14.13) a Guyanese historian, black power activist and pan-African scholar who taught at the Mona campus of the UWI, was prevented by the authorities from returning to Jamaica in 1968. Students on the Mona campus led a mass protest, three persons were killed and the unrest spread to the other campuses. At about that time Caribbean students at the George Williams University in Montreal rioted, protesting racism. In support, UWI students also demonstrated against Canadian organisations here in the Caribbean, such as banks. At the St Augustine campus in Trinidad they picketed the gates, refusing entry to the Canadian Governor General and the Prime Minister. The unrest spread and in Trinidad the National Joint Action Committee (NJAC), an organisation seeking the empowerment of black people and made up mostly of university students, lecturers and black power advocates, became the body around which a revolution developed. Later they were joined by the Indian sugar workers, the unemployed and trade unionists. The mass movement culminated in 1970 in the mutiny of the army and a state of emergency.

There were similar incidents throughout the Caribbean, and in Grenada the unrest led eventually to the 1979 takeover of the government by the New Jewel Movement (NJM). In Cuba the heightened interest in the struggle of black people resulted in Cuba giving assistance to liberation groups in Africa fighting for their independence, notably in Angola against the Portuguese. In all these cases the emphasis was on the ideas of Garvey and pan-Africanism – more empowerment to African people, better economic conditions and less emphasis on foreign customs.



Fig. 14.5 The location of the Italo-Ethiopian war

◆ What evidence can you offer to show that the ideas of pan-Africanism are still important today? How could these be expressed?

14.2.2 **Négritude**

A unique brand of pan-Africanism emerged in the 1960s in the French colonies of the Caribbean and Africa – **négritude**. It called for all people of African origin to

Négritude means 'blackness' in French.

celebrate their blackness. It did not recognise geographical or regional distinctions. The movement's main thinkers were the Martinicans Aimé Césaire (Fig. 14.6) and Frantz Fanon, Léon Damas of French Guiana and Léopold Senghor (Fig. 14.7), who later became head of state in Senegal. The movement began in Paris, where members published a journal providing a forum to express sentiments about the French policy of total cultural assimilation of its colonies, the sidelining of African culture and the near impossibility of gaining independence.

Négritude tended to focus on black consciousness and black pride because, as these activists saw it, living in a context where only French culture and civilisation were promoted threatened the core of a black identity. In both Martinique and Guadeloupe small Marxist groups sought to mobilise the people to overthrow the French, but with little success. Aimé Césaire resigned from the French Communist Party on the grounds that the race struggle

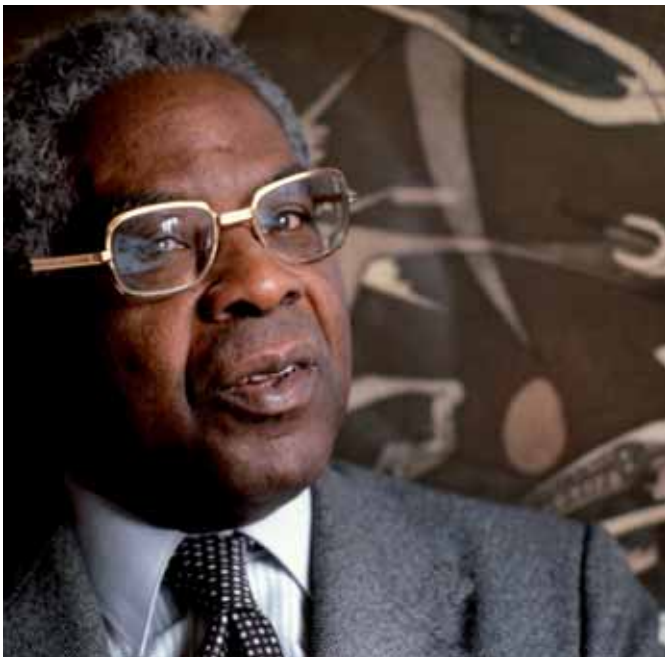


Fig. 14.6 Aimé Césaire

was different from the class struggle. In the intellectual movement of pan-Africanism there was a definite urge to move away from traditional European ideologies such as capitalism, and from the earliest days there were experiments with communism. However, there was still dissatisfaction, because this too is largely a European ideology.

Frantz Fanon represents the more radical arm of *négritude*. He was a student of Césaire's and worked in France and Algeria as a psychologist, experiencing first-hand the cruelty and barbarity of the French police in their treatment of Algerians fighting for their independence. This long and bloody war was documented by Fanon in his book *The Wretched of the Earth*, published in 1961. In a later publication, *Black Skin, White Masks*, he sought to explore the alienation of black people from their cultural roots. Fanon saw no other course but the violent overthrow of colonial governments. At the time such sentiments lent support to the growing Black Power movement in the US.

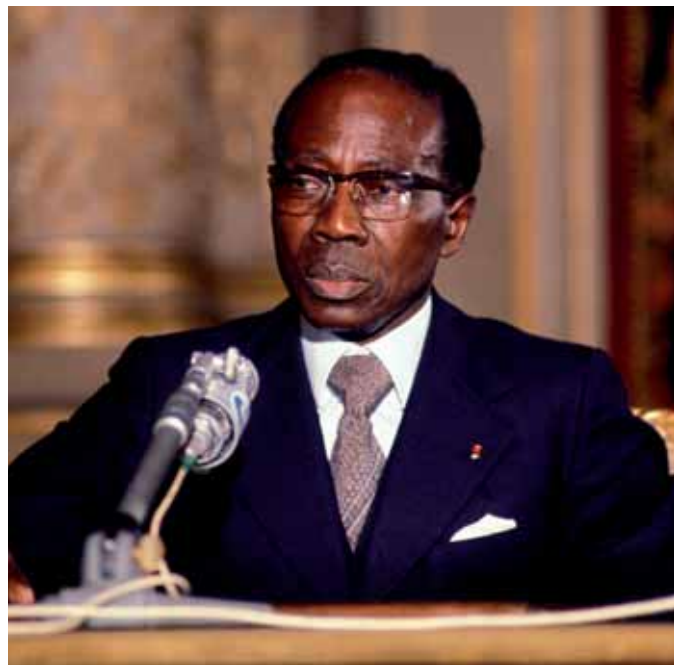


Fig. 14.7 Léopold Senghor

Léopold Senghor, writer and poet, was president of Senegal from 1960 to 1980. He sought to celebrate blackness in his work by describing the traditions and values of African culture as distinctly different from the European. For example, Africans, he claimed, were more intuitive, more emotional and more spiritual, while Europeans relied on cold and clinical reason. He too experimented with socialist ideology as outlined by

Marx but felt that, since communal life had long existed in Africa, an African type of socialism was more relevant.

Fanon criticised Senghor's portrayal of black people, saying that it narrowed the individual and left no room for Africans who are analytical and abstract thinkers: in fact, it stereotyped Africans. However, the French Caribbean has absorbed the philosophy of *négritude* and it is given full flower in poetry, art and literature today.

14.2.3 The Rastafari

You have already learned something of the religious views of the Rastafari in Chapter 6 and Chapter 8, and of their cultural importance in Chapter 7. Reggae music, in particular, with its associations with resistance to colonialism, gave a clear indication of the status of the Rastafari in West Indian culture as a whole. In this section we concentrate on the political philosophy behind the Rastafari movement, and its connections with pan-Africanism.

Early on, the Rastafari were very much influenced by Garvey, who combined the strong political message of black nationalism based on the Holy Bible with a prophecy that 'princes shall come out of Ethiopia'. They regarded Garvey as a second John the Baptist, especially when Haile Selassie was proclaimed emperor of Ethiopia, as he seemed to have predicted. The rhetorical and symbolical statements made by Garvey, that a king will come out of Africa, and the prominence he gave in his newspapers to Haile Selassie's coronation, convinced the Rastafari to proclaim Haile Selassie as 'King of Kings and Lord of Lords'. They were also inclined to take Garvey's 'back to Africa' call literally. The Rastafari more than any other group put into practice the teachings of Garvey which idealised and symbolised Africa.

When Mussolini annexed Ethiopia and deposed the Emperor in 1935, this act of war against a personage whom the Rastafarians considered divine deepened their hostility to the white man's world (which they called 'Babylon'). Rastafari worship of the Ethiopian monarch was also a thorn in the flesh of the British, who saw it as denial of their authority, and they relentlessly persecuted the Rastafari. In Jamaica, Rastafari leaders ignored laws they regarded as 'of Babylon' and therefore not applicable to them. In addition, they deliberately adopted a ragged, unkempt look, including their prized dreadlocks, and they were distrusted by mainstream society who regarded them as potential criminals, especially in view of their adoption of marijuana (holy weed) as an important ingredient in their rituals. Many Rastafari chose deliberately to set themselves apart by eschewing the acquisitiveness of capitalism and living simply.



SUMMARY

In the Caribbean the pan-African movement influenced the decolonisation process through the growth of trade unions and political organisations promoting black consciousness and the unity of African people. Its main tenets stemmed from the ideological outlook of Marcus Garvey and these were mainly responsible for the formation of several related movements and ideologies – the civil rights movement, black power, *négritude*, Black Muslims, the Rastafari religion and the continental pan-African strategy. All these different ideologies held broadly similar views but differed on how to realise their goals. For many, this meant embracing Marxism as an economic antidote to the capitalism of the oppressors. For some it meant armed struggle. For others the goals of black consciousness and black pride were to be discovered in the arts – literature, poetry, drama – which today are increasingly popular media for the dissemination of black thought.

14.3

Economic perspectives

14.3.1

Industrialisation by Invitation

Any discussion of the economic strategy known as 'industrialisation by invitation', popularly adopted by Caribbean governments in the 1960s, must mention Sir William Arthur Lewis. He was born in St Lucia in 1915 of Antiguan parents and became a distinguished economist, lecturing at universities internationally and spearheading economic reforms in developing countries. He also became vice-chancellor of the UWI and was instrumental in establishing the Caribbean Development Bank in Barbados. For his work, which threw light on the economic problems of ex-colonial countries and the strategies to improve economic growth, he was knighted in 1963 and awarded the Nobel Prize in 1979, commemorated in a statue (Fig. 14.8). He did not use the term 'industrialisation by invitation', though; that was applied with hindsight by economists critical of the policy.

Lewis became interested in the policy of deliberately inviting FDI, as exemplified by Operation Bootstrap in Puerto Rico (see Box 14.7), and eventually put forward his ideas about how it could work in the context of the small ex-colonies of the British West Indies. Our economies

were mainly agricultural and we needed to stimulate industrial growth and trade in manufactured goods to diversify the economic base. We tend to have monocrop economies. While that term is usually applied to our dependence on sugar or bananas, it also characterises our dependence on tourism or financial services or the oil industry. These are also referred to as the ‘offshore sector’, or that part of the economy organised for export to earn foreign currency. Lewis proposed a strategy to invite foreign investment as an interim measure to stimulate growth, not only in industry but also in agriculture, and therefore to reduce our dependency on the export sector.

Lewis reasoned that what we in the Caribbean had in great abundance was unskilled labour in agriculture and among the unemployed. We did not have much capital. One way of stimulating industrial growth (and increasing exports) in the short term was to invite foreign multinational corporations (MNCs, similar to today’s TNCs) with millions of dollars at their disposal to set up their operations here. They would earn large profits by employing the cheap surplus labour from agriculture. They would also benefit from tax holidays for the first five or ten years of their operations, and other concessions such as subsidies. In agriculture the price of labour would rise (higher wages) because the excess had been absorbed into industry.

Lewis proposed that the products of the MNCs would be marketed through the excellent distribution networks which they themselves already owned (for

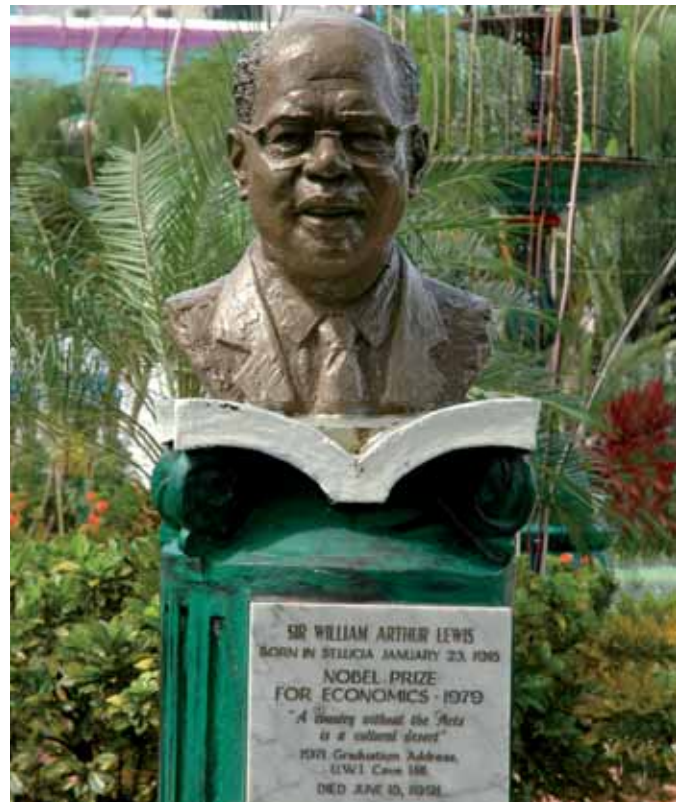


Fig. 14.8 Statue commemorating Sir William Arthur Lewis and his Nobel Prize for economics

BOX 14.7 Operation Bootstrap

Operation Bootstrap was established in Puerto Rico around the 1930s and 1940s. Its goals were to propel Puerto Rico from being an agrarian society and exporter of primary products to an industrialised nation. The policy sought to use cheap available labour as an incentive to multinational companies to come in and establish industries. Those companies taking up the offer would also receive tax-free concessions. The result was that Puerto Rico became industrialised and large numbers of agricultural workers left poorly paying jobs and subsistence farming in the rural areas to join the ranks of factory workers earning wages. The scheme met with mixed success as the rural areas became underpopulated and neglected while urban populations and poverty grew, stimulating migration to the US.

example, shipping fleets) and sold in the markets which they already commanded. By using the MNCs in this way, Caribbean countries would not have to bother with owning or leasing sea and air transport to export the finished products, at least in the short term. Neither would they have to rely on the goodwill of other countries to allow their products in without punitive tariffs. The MNCs, with their tremendous resources, had already penetrated markets in the developed and the developing world. In Lewis’s opinion no Caribbean country had the capital, infrastructure or market share penetration to make a successful attempt at industrialisation. Thus, the strategy of inviting foreign investors to set up shop and boost the export of manufactured goods could neutralise all these negative factors.

Lewis’s strategy was not just about ‘industrialisation by invitation’. It was meant to be an attempt to deal with the situation of a large surplus labour force and jump-start economic diversification. In this scheme the rural areas would become more prosperous, benefiting from better wages in agriculture and the higher wages paid by the multinationals. Lewis also envisaged that, as wages went up in agriculture, technical innovations would become possible to increase productivity. There was the

possibility of local initiatives in agriculture contributing to manufacturing in the form of agro-processing – the bottling and canning of fruits, preserves, confectionery and drinks – as well as to service industries, as in hotels, restaurants or the export of food products, flowers, and so on. The backward and forward linkages that people would be able to develop would create a locally based industry which was integrally linked to agriculture (and increasingly independent of foreign capital). All the time we would see the active involvement of the rural areas in this strategy.

Lewis's plan was based on capitalist ideology. He saw the MNCs as a transitional phase which would enable Caribbean nations to emerge from the depressed condition they had inherited from colonialism. They would learn managerial and technical skills and the plan was that the state could set up industries based on these skills once the MNCs left, or develop a partnership with them to continue production for export. At the same time, vibrant local initiatives would spring up, feeding off the higher wages in agriculture and the linkages which local people were creating between agriculture and industry.

The strategy eventually failed, which led critics to say that the ideas had been wrong all along. Caribbean governments had invited the MNCs but did not then control them. Governments provided sites or industrial estates with warehouses and infrastructure (water, roads, electricity and telephone services) for the MNCs, which also benefited from the tax breaks and duty-free concessions. When that initial period was over they closed up shop and moved on. In addition, theirs were mainly capital-intensive industries which did not significantly lessen the numbers of unemployed and the numbers in agriculture. Virtually no provision was made for training citizens to organise and run plants, such as the assembly of motor vehicles and small appliances.

This model was strongly criticised, especially by Caribbean thinkers such as Lloyd Best and the New World Group, who used a plantation model to describe the problems and issues in Caribbean economy and society (Box 14.8). While the 'industrialisation by invitation' policy did not result in significant economic growth in the Caribbean, the critique by Best and the New World Group did not deny that Lewis had made a fundamental contribution to economic thought. His focus on the

BOX 14.8

Lloyd Best and the plantation model

Lloyd Best and the New World Group (a movement of intellectuals and radical thinkers established in the early 1960s with members from the Caribbean, the US, Canada and the UK) believed that an economic strategy for the Caribbean had to recognise the *dependency model of economic thought*. This model sees the Caribbean as a plantation society – one that is still enmeshed in colonial structures such as terms of trade which favour the metropole and where local technology, capital, entrepreneurship and markets are only minimally developed, making the society dependent on the metropole. In such a context Best and his colleagues said that what was needed to address the problems of Caribbean societies was independent thought – inward thinking and creativity – not dependence on foreign capital, ideas and expertise, technology and markets. Foreign companies were likely to keep Caribbean countries as plantation societies. They would hardly encourage the development of local industries, change the mindset which preferred foreign goods or develop rural infrastructure if they did not profit from these moves.

Best showed that development in the Caribbean was obstructed by the historical capitalist structures

of the plantation system; and even today we have only succeeded in creating a modified plantation economy. This stance influenced his main criticism of Arthur Lewis's strategy for industrialisation; it called for an increase in the activity of foreign capital in the Caribbean – yet we continue to be enmeshed in foreign, colonialist and capitalist structures. According to Best, what we need to combat the legacy of British capitalism as independent countries today is a focus on the non-plantation aspects of the economy: for example, that part of the economy which is not primarily bound up with export, cash crops, foreign capital and MNCs. We need to develop the subsistence economy and the food economy, and create new alliances and new technologies to support indigenous industrialisation. Best is of the opinion that there is still scope for local theorising and local entrepreneurship in alleviating our problems. For this reason he does not uphold Marxism (an imported ideology), and feels we can develop our own economic ideologies that support economic independence, which has been elusive to date.

problem of a large labour supply in developing countries and how to mobilise a country from this state to one of export-led growth was a breakthrough. Economists in developing countries today, where surplus labour is a major problem, find Lewis's transitional and interim strategies about using the MNCs immensely practical, provided that the MNCs can become more attuned to the development needs of the particular country. MNCs/TNCs are still being seen as an important means to economic development. In fact, the phases which Lewis envisaged, and the scheme in all its complexity, were never fully implemented. In today's world of globalisation, where MNCs drive global industries, Lewis's ideas are more relevant than ever to Caribbean governments.

The policy of industrialisation by invitation focused on foreign capital as a trigger to spur on economic growth. It failed because capitalist forces tend to be solely interested in profits and some meaningful negotiations should have taken place to ensure that the benefits as originally envisaged had a chance of being realised. As Lloyd Best and the New World Group pointed out, we need to control our own resources and to move away from traditional economic models which make us dependent on foreigners and perpetuate the legacy of colonialism in the economic structures we have inherited. Both ideological positions have some merit, as today MNCs/TNCs are more prevalent than ever, but this time some at least do now engage with the communities in which they work, offering educational scholarships, building housing and schools and acting more as stakeholders than mere employers.

ACTIVITY 14.2

1. Both Lewis and Best put forward ideologies of industrial development. Consider the history of economic development in your country; which model seems to be more important at the moment, and why?
2. If you were to follow Best's idea about independent thinking when applied to development issues, what strategies do you think might be useful in your country in deepening economic development?

14.3.2 Marxism and Neo-Marxism

Marxists follow the teachings of Karl Marx (1818–1883), whose theory about how societies develop over time and its underlying concepts proved to have great power in explaining Caribbean life. As a result, Marxist and neo-Marxist thinkers have formed a radical

tradition in Caribbean intellectual life. Marxist ideas have been embraced by many Caribbean thinkers of different ideologies. These theorists sought alternative explanations to capitalism in investigating the plight of the black underclass experiencing racism, colonialism and the persistence of colonial structures. From writers and novelists to pan-Africanists, dependency theorists (see §14.3.3) and economists such as those in the New World Group, they have adopted Marxist and neo-Marxist (Box 14.9) positions in contributing to the debate on development.

BOX 14.9

Neo-Marxism

Many persons used Marx's ideas to devise theories of their own about the relationship between changes in the economy and changes in society. V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky are two Russian thinkers who merged their ideas with that of Marx in bringing the Soviet State (the USSR, or Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) into being. Mao Zedong of China also fused his understanding of the Chinese people and their culture in the creation of a socialist state, the People's Republic of China. Marxist thinkers who greatly elaborated the role of the superstructure in influencing social life are called neo-Marxists. While Marx did discuss the superstructure (those social institutions such as politics, religion, the family, education and the mass media where the dominant ideas and beliefs reflect those of the elite groups in the economy – see Chapter 6), his emphasis tended to be on the economy or substructure. For example, C.L.R. James described the Haitian Revolution in terms of a new set of ideas in the superstructure replacing those of the colonial regime (Box 14.12). Other neo-Marxist thinkers about Caribbean development include the dependency theorists (§14.3.3) and the New World Group, including Walter Rodney (Box 14.13).

Marx criticised capitalism but saw it as a necessary stage during which humankind will grow to better understand oppression and see the need to build a society based on communal values (Box 4.10). It is no wonder, then, that the intellectual traditions in the Caribbean are so intertwined with Marxism. From the end of the nineteenth century, Caribbean thinkers found freedom from racial and class oppression in a Marxist understanding of society more than any other. Pan-Africanists such as Cyril Briggs and

BOX 14.10 Marxist theory

Marx's theory argued that society was evolving through various stages where the economy and the relationships of different groups within the economy defined the type of society which evolved.

Stage 1. The very earliest societies were *communitarian*, based on equal distribution of work, where everyone owned the property of the clan, and there were few distinctions between members. This was an egalitarian society.

Stage 2. Over time more powerful groups subjugated others as slaves, and a system of *social stratification* developed. As the economy developed it became necessary to have workers who had some kind of freedom to move, to make decisions and to develop a variety of skills. This could not come about easily in an economic system based on effective slavery.

Stage 3. The *feudal system* then developed, in which powerful nobles and aristocrats were able to protect the villagers on their lands in return for labour, produce and loyalty. In each case Marx was able to show that the societies underwent change when contradictions or tensions developed in the economy, bringing about changes in the social relations between groups. One example was feudal society in Europe, where members of the aristocracy owned vast estates on which serfs lived and worked. There were marked social distinctions and inequities but this system of social organisation remained stable for centuries.

Stage 4. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries an enterprising class of traders, merchants and industrialists grew up, who made vast amounts of money in shipping, banking and manufacturing. This is known as *capitalism*. Thousands of serfs found their way into the newly expanding towns where they were paid wages for factory work. The new class of capitalists was able to buy the estates of the nobles, who had become increasingly impoverished as the agricultural population declined. Because they now owned land they became eligible to enter Parliament and make laws favouring investment, business and the development of a middle class. The economic base shifted to business, manufacturing and heavy industry, such as iron and steel. Society became reorganised into workers (those with their labour to sell) and capitalists (those who owned the means of production, such as land, capital, factories, banks and businesses).

Marx lived in England during the nineteenth century and was able to observe the capitalist phase of his theory at first hand. He saw that for capitalism to grow and thrive the workers had to be exploited by their bosses. For example, workers' wages in most firms were not set according to profits earned by the business but kept at the very lowest level in order to maximise profits for the capitalists. The owners of business and industry maintained a common front to keep wages down. The large profits made by capitalists sustained a high standard of living and a lifestyle very different from that of the workers. However, Marx pointed out that this state of affairs had inherent contradictions. The capitalist needed workers in order to make profits; the worker needed the capitalist to provide a job and wages. But it was not a harmonious relationship – the capitalist was committed to extracting maximum labour for the lowest wages and the workers in their turn struggled to achieve better wages and working conditions.

Stage 5. It was inevitable, given this state of affairs where the rich grew richer and the poor increasingly poorer, that *collective action by labour* would come about in the form of trade unions agitating for better conditions and wages, including the power of labour to strike. However, the poor cannot maintain strike action for long, since every day they withdraw their labour they are paid no wages, whereas capitalists (if they have a mind to) can prolong a strike to the point that workers are actually glad to return even if their demands are not met. The stage was set for a series of economic crises in capitalist societies and there would come a time, according to Marx, when the proletariat (workers) would seek to overthrow the bourgeoisie (capitalists) and bring an end to that form of society.

Stage 6. This next stage Marx described as *socialism*, where the goal is to bring about a classless society. This can only come about when all members of society share in the means of production. For this to happen all people need to understand their class position. For example, capitalists must understand that their position implies oppression of others, and any system where oppression occurs cannot last because of its inherent contradictions. Workers too need to understand that under a capitalist system they are oppressed, and so low wages or unfair treatment should not be taken as normal. According to Marx, only when people can see through this false consciousness in which they have been socialised will they recognise the need for socialism.

BOX 14.10 Marxist theory (continued)

Stage 7. The socialist stage of Marx's theory of human and social development is a transition to *communism*. Socialism is the period when institutions are being put in place for everyone to own the wealth of the land and to have an equal voice in government. When this has been achieved, there is no need even for a state. According to Marx the state 'withers away' because a state is really a machinery to get things done, to ensure that no group is exploiting another, to protect people, and so on. Communism is thus an ideal (some say utopia) towards which socialist states are working – a situation in which the people, now enlightened and able to see clearly the nature of oppression, alienation and illusion, are free to form a democratic society.

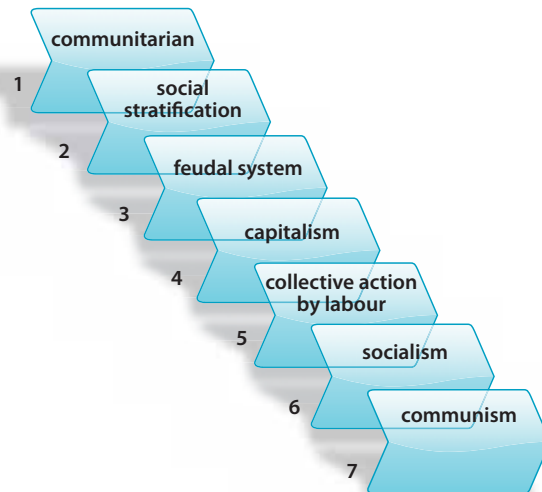


Fig. 14.9 The seven stages of society in Marxist theory

BOX 14.11 Eric Williams

In 1944 Eric Williams published *Capitalism and Slavery*, in which he gave a new perspective on African slavery and its abolition. He showed that the Caribbean slave plantation was an early form of capitalist enterprise and that the surplus value generated drove the engine of the Industrial Revolution and what was to become the advanced capitalist society of Britain. All this capitalist wealth was built squarely on slavery – Britain's exploitation of the people and resources of Africa and the Caribbean. Without the slave trade, slavery and the plantation system, Britain would not have become such a big industrial power.

Williams then went on to give a Marxist explanation of why slavery was abolished. Traditional explanations tended to focus on British efforts, such as that of the humanitarians, the Quakers and those politicians who spoke for mercy and charity for the enslaved people of the Caribbean. This was the moral argument which had been given for years about why Britain had abolished slavery. Williams, however, showed that when capitalism had reached an advanced stage of technological, industrial and scientific applications, it no longer needed the labour-intensive input of the enslaved from overseas plantations. In fact, capitalists now found that slavery was an expensive and outmoded system which prevented the introduction of modern technologies to increase efficiency. Thus, the capitalist machinery which was the sugar plantation came into being to provide excess capital and wealth for newly industrialising Britain and



was destroyed by Britain when it did not need such a system any more. Williams was thus saying that in Britain abolition was an ideology connected less with humanitarian goals than with the 'freeing up' of labour, trade and capital for the transition into advanced global capitalism. Britain by now had a worldwide empire and did not need to prop up expensive and backward slave regimes.

While James (Box 14.12) was concerned with the removal of slavery through a proletariat revolution (as in Haiti), Williams was concerned with how the changing emphases of capitalism (shown up in the substructure or economic base of the society) resulted in changes in the superstructure (the transition from slavery to a free society).

Fig. 14.10 Eric Williams as prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago

BOX 14.12 C.L.R. James

C.L.R. James (1901–1989) is considered to be one of the foremost intellectuals of the twentieth century, and not only by Caribbean persons. He was born in Trinidad where he began to write novels and study the game of cricket as an art form, a colonisation tool and a means of decolonisation. He then left for England, where he continued his literary career and studied the works of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky. He became a Trotskyist and from then on became part of the radical tradition influencing Caribbean life. He wrote extensively on Marxism, lectured and engaged Trotsky himself in debate. Like all Caribbean thinkers who have been attracted to Marxism, he was concerned about linking the struggles of the oppressed in the colonies with the oppression of the proletariat in capitalist countries. He journeyed to the US where he studied racism and the condition of the American blacks. He even mobilised blacks in a sharecropper's strike in the American South.

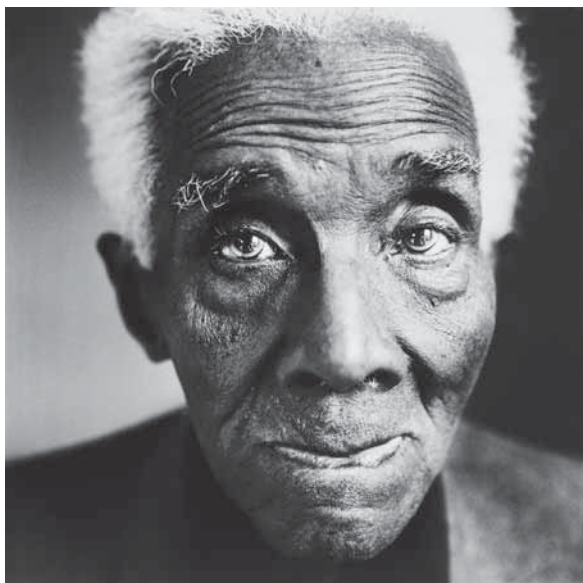


Fig. 14.11 C.L.R. James

In his speeches and writings in the 1930s James put forward the view that the American blacks constituted the most revolutionary force in the US. This was difficult for others at the time to see. Conventional opinion among radical white organisations, economic support groups and even the socialist movement was that the American blacks needed the advocacy of mainstream groups to assist them in their bid for freedom. James saw the black struggle as having a vitality of

its own, rather than being dependent on other organisations such as the labour movement or Marxist groups to lead it. Two decades later his ideas came into being with the civil rights movement and black power. (Garvey had had similar ideas about black people owning their own institutions but did not conceive the issue as a working-class revolution.)

James was also closely associated with George Padmore (see Box 14.4) in the pan-African movement. In London James edited both the Trotskyite newspaper and the pan-African newspaper of Padmore. They both found that the peculiar racial struggle of black people in the Caribbean could not find an exact equal or answer in the ways Marxism was being interpreted by theorists at the time. This led them both to eventually seek independent thought on the struggle of black people for liberation. James, though, never gave up on the power of a Marxist analysis of society. His search for a revolutionary path to liberate African people led him to a thorough study of the Haitian Revolution of 1791, producing *The Black Jacobins* in 1938. In this book for the first time a neo-Marxist explanation of the events in San Domingo (St Domingue, the French colony which became Haiti) was put forward. He likened the enslaved population in San Domingo to the proletariat, working in the 'factory' which was the plantation, and its manufacturing processes, producing goods for export. For example, he says (1963, pp 85–6):

The slaves worked on the land, and, like revolutionary peasants everywhere, they aimed at the extermination of their oppressors. But working and living together in gangs of hundreds on the huge sugar-factories which covered North Plain, they were closer to a modern proletariat than any group of workers in existence at the time, and the rising was, therefore, a thoroughly prepared and organised mass movement.

Previously, the Haitian Revolution had been explained in terms of a spontaneous reaction to the brutality of the French planter class. Now James was saying that as workers under factory-like conditions they had developed a sense of class consciousness, and the events of the French Revolution of 1789 served to draw the veil from their eyes, revealing the **false consciousness** under which they had been operating.

False consciousness is a term used by Marx to describe the predicament of the proletariat who do not know they are being duped by the bourgeois class to accept values which are not in their best interests but serve the capitalists quite well.

BOX 14.12 C.L.R. James (continued)

In James's opinion the Haitian Revolution was a fully-fledged workers' revolution overthrowing the capitalist class and establishing a socialist state. (The watchwords of the French Revolution were 'liberty, equality and fraternity' – possibly more relevant to the Haitian masses than to the French peasantry.) James's view was based on the fact that the revolution continued year after year

from 1791 to 1804, organised itself successfully against a number of European armies and produced leaders such as Toussaint L'Ouverture, Dessalines and Christophe to carry on the fight. It was not a mere spontaneous rebellion but the basis for the proletarian revolution, after which the Haitian leaders sought to distribute land to the landless and pay a fixed wage – which were socialist policies.

Claude McKay (Box 14.3), George Padmore (Box 14.4), and C.L.R. James (Box 14.12), as well as black power advocates such as Stokely Carmichael (Box 14.6) and *négritude* activists such as Fanon and Césaire (§14.2.2), all at one time in their careers preferred a Marxist or neo-Marxist vision for Caribbean society. Later on the dependency theorists and some members of the New World Group focused on underdevelopment within a neo-Marxist framework: for example, George Beckford and Walter Rodney (Box 14.13). Those who have gone beyond thought to bring Marxist principles to bear in governing Caribbean countries include:

- Fidel Castro in Cuba (1959, through revolution);
- Maurice Bishop in Grenada (1979, through a coup d'état);
- Michael Manley in Jamaica (1970s, through legislation);
- Cheddi Jagan in Guyana (through the democratic election of a socialist party, in 1953, 1957 and 1961, each time overthrown by British or American intervention).

ACTIVITY 14.3

1. Suggest several reasons why the terms 'socialism' and 'communism' tend to be used interchangeably.
2. Summarise the dissatisfaction which Caribbean thinkers have had with capitalism as an economic system.

This kind of analysis influenced the radical tradition in Caribbean intellectual life. For example, Eric Williams (a student of James) later analysed British capitalism in the Caribbean by focusing on the role of the substructure (the economy) in destroying slavery (Box 14.11). He was able to show that the new arrangements or contradictions in the economy fostered superstructural ideas, forcing

the British to abolish slavery. Dr Eric Williams, the first prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago, analysed the reasons for the abolition of slavery in relation to the demands of British capitalism rather than the traditional explanations, which spoke of a humanitarian attitude on the part of the British public and parliamentarians such as William Wilberforce. While Williams was not a Marxist, he used the analytical tools of Marxism to investigate capitalism and slavery, and this thesis continues to be debated by international scholars even today.

Both Williams and Rodney came under the influence of C.L.R. James, as members of his discussion groups and as his students in London. Some of the theorists belonging to the New World Group, such as George Beckford, who wrote *Persistent Poverty*, were also Marxist in orientation.

ACTIVITY 14.4

1. Explain why Williams's thesis about the ending of slavery was so controversial.
2. What were the 'analytical tools of Marxism' which Williams used?
3. Explain what is meant by a 'radical school' of intellectuals.

14.3.3 Dependency Theorists

Dependency theory is closely related to the plantation model of society (Box 14.8), and some dependency theorists have followed Marxist or neo-Marxist ideas. As well as Best and his colleagues with their plantation model, Dr Walter Rodney was also developing his own version of dependency theory. Rodney wrote the now famous book, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, to examine how capitalism, under colonialism, sought to keep colonies in an economically backward state (Box 14.13).

BOX 14.13 Walter Rodney, capitalism and underdevelopment

In his short life (1942–1980) Walter Rodney maintained a consistent activist stance in criticising the government of his native Guyana, the government of Jamaica where he was lecturing and the system of capitalism in Africa, where he lived for a time – lecturing, writing, researching and mobilising the masses. Wherever he lived he sought to show how capitalism was built on a premise of underdevelopment for the colony which directly impacted the poor.

He lived and worked in Tanzania between 1968 and 1974 and took an active part in the liberation struggles going on in Africa. He developed a following or school of thought around the idea put forward by C.L.R. James two generations before in relation to the Haitian Revolution (Box 14.12), that self-emancipation of the working class was necessary, and entirely possible. Rodney found that the postcolonial leadership, the black elites (in the Caribbean and Africa), could not be depended on to improve the living and working conditions of the impoverished masses; instead they were the servants of international capitalism.

Rodney saw capitalism in colonial territories as constituting a 'double negative'. For example:

- In the colonies, capital from Europe was invested mainly in agriculture and large profits were derived, using cheap manual labour. The profits went to Britain to develop more industries and better infrastructure. The value of what colonial labour had contributed to the accumulation of such profits was never paid to the colony, even in the form of social services. The colonial relationship compounded the exploitative nature of capitalism. Normally, a capitalist would reinvest his profits locally to expand the business, and even though workers were poorly paid they would benefit from better roads and services, and would perhaps learn different skills.

- The British did not see the importance of establishing industries locally. In fact, they actively sought to prevent any industry developing which would threaten the volume of industrial exports from Britain. This led to the peculiar situation where the colonies exported raw sugar to Britain and imported refined sugar from Britain.
- British capitalism prevented the development of a diversified economy, which could have grown from the backward and forward linkages between agriculture and industry or between industries. Thus, the opportunity for developing competencies in a whole range of skills, did not have a chance to take place. The ultimate aim of British capitalism seems to have been to develop skills and industrial strength in the metropole and to keep the colony as a source of cheap manual labour engaged in the extraction of raw materials or agriculture for export to Britain (that is, in an underdeveloped state).

Rodney worked with several African countries in seeking a socialist path of development to bring about more egalitarian structures and relationships. His was an example of neo-Marxist thought – that workers needed to appreciate not only their class oppression in the capitalist, colonial scheme of things but even more importantly the racist ideology or system of ideas which sought to maintain white capitalist domination even when colonialism was no more.

Rodney regarded himself as Guyanese, Caribbean and also African, and was an advocate of pan-Africanism and black power. His stirring speeches and the following he drew frightened pro-capitalist governments so that he was banned from Jamaica, and while running for election in Guyana he was assassinated.



SUMMARY

There is a rich debate in Caribbean intellectual thought which centres on the economy and how it can be purged of its colonial or plantation-like features. The policy of 'industrialisation by invitation' was based on the ideology of capitalism but saw foreign capital as a trigger to spur on economic growth, including rural development. It failed because FDI could not be influenced to put in train measures which would help Caribbean economies to become resilient. Other ideologies sought a rethinking of

British capitalism and how it had impacted upon the Caribbean. They called for indigenous-based solutions to our problems, and to continue a tradition of interrogating underdevelopment to help us to better understand development. The promise of Marxism influenced many Caribbean thinkers, who were drawn to its egalitarian nature, especially as Caribbean societies suffered from racial, economic and political oppression.

14.4

Caribbean feminist perspectives

Long before feminism became an ideology (or group of ideologies), there were feminists. Individual women concerned with the inequities being suffered by women as a group, as well as other disadvantaged groups, were willing to take leadership roles to address the issue. In the US women were involved in the anti-slavery and suffragette movements. In the nineteenth century in both the UK and the US there were efforts to capture different feminist agendas through associations, conferences, public meetings and pamphlets. The Caribbean also had a remarkable group of women, our early feminists.

14.4.1 Early Caribbean Feminists

One remarkable Caribbean woman was Mary Seacole (1829–1881), who was born in Jamaica as a free person of colour in a slave society. She learned the healing arts from her mother and became a nurse by teaching herself and learning from doctors. She had a tremendous desire to help others and became very expert in nursing. She was of the belief that through this strength she could overcome racism and the limitations imposed on women. The activities of Florence Nightingale in the Crimean War made the news all over the world and Mary decided to journey to England to volunteer her skills. But Nightingale would have nothing to do with her. The intrepid Mary made her own way to the Crimea and set up a hospital closer to the front than the Nightingale nurses and went on to earn the respect of all who knew her. She would not have heard of the word ‘feminist’, or even thought of gender equality as something imaginable for all women, but she was able to chart a course through racist and gender ideologies and triumph over them by living life on equal terms with others.

Similarly, Elma François (1897–1944) was born in St Vincent in humble circumstances. Working in a sugar factory as a young woman, she tried to organise the workers to bargain for better conditions and was fired. These were times of economic depression and widespread hardship, particularly among the poor. Like Mary Seacole, she was concerned about human suffering, and seemed



Fig. 14.12 Women protesters in Martinique in the 1930s

equally fearless. She migrated to Trinidad where she became an ardent pan-Africanist and a union activist, campaigned ceaselessly on the highways and byways to expose the inequalities and oppression of colonialism, challenged the power of the Roman Catholic Church and became a communist and a founding member of the Negro Welfare Cultural and Social Association (NWCSEA). This organisation promoted political activism and had women's bureaus, it formed two national trade unions and its membership supported Butler in the nationwide strikes of 1937. Elma was arrested for her role in the unrest and tried for sedition. She opted to defend herself in court and was found not guilty. Like Mary Seacole, Elma was not willing to recognise that racial, ethnic or gender ideology could keep her from doing her life's work.

While these two women were spectacular in how they resisted the structures in their lives, there were also others imbued with a spirit of resistance and committed to working for the liberation of black people. Pan-Africanism was a forum for much of this activism. Catherine McKenzie of Jamaica was outspoken on the subject of equal rights for women. So was Amy Ashwood Garvey, the first wife of Marcus Garvey, who in London was closely associated with the suffragette movement. Una Marson, a Jamaican living in London in the 1930s, became active in the pan-African movement, journeying to Africa and obtaining a post at the League of Nations in Geneva (Reddock, 2004). Garveyism and pan-

Africanism inspired many women leading the struggle to end colonialism in the Caribbean, and in their quest for equality and liberation they were our early feminists.

The intellectual tradition of feminism is based on the perceived need for equality of the sexes. Contrary to popular opinion, feminism is not about rule by women, it is very much concerned with men and the relationships between men and women. Feminists, then, may be both women and men as they study the issue of gender inequality, whether at the workplace, in politics, in leadership positions or in the family. Feminist writers show that in almost every sphere of social life, men are the primary decision-makers and exert influence and power over others, leading to an imbalance in power between the sexes. This imbalance leads to inequitable access to resources and to the oppression of women by men, a condition which feminists say arises from patriarchy (Box 14.14).

Internationally, feminists first focused on women's studies and 'women's liberation' in order to equalise the status of women and men and thus release women from subordinate positions. In the Caribbean this was represented by the Women in Development (WID) programme of the UWI and the University of Guyana to

integrate women into the development process through income-generating projects and increasing access to educational opportunities.

Later feminists focused on Gender Studies: that is, the study of the social relationships between men and women, historically and in contemporary life. For example, the nature of gender roles is studied (what does 'masculine' and 'feminine' mean), and how it leads to the sexual division of labour (woman as homemaker and caretaker and man as breadwinner). The creation of gender identities is part of this study (how persons commit to a certain image of self that is male or female) and this to a large extent brings the process of gender socialisation under examination to interrogate how gender stereotypes, gender bias and gender ideologies develop. Interrogating these concepts within Gender Studies led to a more holistic approach in Gender and Development Studies. (Box 14.15 explains the meaning of some of these terms.) The WAND (Women and Development) Project of the UWI, for example, is concerned with how to incorporate a gender system into national, political, economic, social and cultural life so that both men and women can contribute and benefit equally (Box 11.8).

BOX 14.14 Patriarchy

This is a central concept of feminism. It is the condition in social life that feminists are attempting to change. They see it as a historical condition which must be altered if gender equality is to be achieved. A patriarchal gender system subordinates women and therefore also the traditional womanly spheres – pregnancy, childrearing, childminding and domestic or housework. At the same time, such a system blocks the aspirations of women who may want to venture into traditional male centres of power.

While that is the core understanding of patriarchy, feminists go on to say that men as a uniform group and women as a uniform group do not exist in social life. The patriarchs who dominate the society also dominate men of lower socioeconomic groups, men of a different race or ethnicity and men with different sexual preferences. The men who control social, economic and political life block the aspirations and paths of men who are different. They have the power to hire and fire. They also try to exert power in keeping their womenfolk from consorting with 'other' men.

Where homosexuals are concerned, there may be violence and murder (homophobia) because this goes against *machismo* and the understanding of maleness in patriarchy. This is a deeper interpretation of patriarchy; that it is a gender system which inflicts violence and oppression – men oppress women, and wealthy and powerful men oppress men who differ or who are perceived as a threat. Poor women in particular are at risk; they are oppressed by their menfolk, who are more often than not themselves experiencing oppression from the capitalist class.

One interest of feminists is how women collude or cooperate in promoting patriarchy. They say that to the extent that women see themselves as sexual objects they are supporting the exploitation of women by men. To the extent that women do not examine the gender ideologies which limit and restrict them only to certain careers, which prohibit them from running for political office or church leadership, which make laws that control their own bodies (contraception, abortion), they are silently allowing patriarchy to prevail.

BOX 14.15 Defining gender

Here are some useful definitions:

- **Gender:** The social construction of meanings and the relationships that define masculinity and femininity which tend to be based on one's biological sex. A boy is supposed to display masculine behaviours such as 'taking charge'. 'Boy' refers to a biological or sex category. 'Masculine' refers to ideas and ideologies in society about how boys should behave (a gender category).
- **Gender bias:** Unfair treatment based on one's gender. There are certain types of jobs where women are not expected to be successful, and which are considered 'unfeminine' (e.g. engineering, welding, politics).
- **Gender equality:** When males and females enjoy rights and opportunities which do not depend on whether they were born male or female.
- **Gender identity:** How a person defines and expresses what they believe their gender to be. Boys will almost never wear a dress unless they are in special circumstances – as a costume or playing a prank. Men who wear dresses are identifying with a different construction of masculinity than mainstream ideas.
- **Gender ideologies:** Strong beliefs or ideas about the roles which males and females should play and how they should behave. These ideologies may or may not be stereotypes. The gender ideologies of feminists and homosexuals tend to differ from those of the mainstream.
- **Gender roles:** How a person understands how they are expected to behave, given their gender identity. A woman may be more likely to take up the homemaker role in a house than a man, but this can probably be done just as well by either one. A role is a set of expected behaviours usually assigned by society, and one may or may not choose to play the role as society ordains (of course, there are consequences).
- **Gender socialisation:** The process whereby members of society induct new members into the appropriate roles and behaviours which they should take up to conform to society's expectations of masculinity and femininity.
- **Gender stereotypes:** Gendered behaviours which are expected of males or females who, if they do not conform, seem 'odd' and attract negative comments. Thus, it is expected that a man will do the plumbing and repair the roof while a woman will cook (stereotyped gendered behaviours).
- **Gender system:** The characteristic set of gender relations which are dominant in a particular society. These relations will stem from the dominant gender ideologies in that society.

14.4.2 Different Emphases

Feminism as an ideology (or group of ideologies) seeks to end the oppression of women by men. The different ways the issue is conceived lead to different emphases, as seen below and in Fig. 14.13.

Liberal feminism

This is one of the earliest ideologies developed by feminists – that the sexes were equal and should both enjoy political, social and economic equality. This movement began with the struggles of the suffragettes to win the right to vote and eventually expanded to include the removal of all legal and institutional barriers which prevent women from enjoying the same rights and opportunities as men, including in education and the workplace. One of the key areas in which they work for women's rights is in gaining them entry into male-dominated occupations – air traffic controllers, bus

drivers, the military and in industrial settings. By the same token they are also prepared to usher men into women-dominated fields such as secretarial work, especially in difficult economic times when young people find it hard to get jobs. The idea is to 'equalise' opportunities for both genders as much as possible rather than maintaining the idea of difference between the genders.

The liberal feminist movement is criticised as being too benign – it does not interrogate the root causes of inequities but feels that legislation and education can bring about gender equality.

Radical feminism

This section of the feminist movement sees the root cause of the inequity being suffered by women as their oppression by men. They claim that **gender stratification**

Gender stratification refers to the way in which patriarchy fuels or even creates a social hierarchy based on gender.

has ancient roots. Society, they say, is organised along a male system of power and privilege (patriarchy) which encourages sexism – a form of discrimination where one sex (women) is believed to be inferior to the other. Radical feminists tend to stress the differences between men and women while liberal feminists stress sameness or equality. It is the recognition of this difference as something to be respected which radical feminists are seeking. For example, they feel that traits such as nurturing, caring, helping, teaching, facilitating, mothering, empathising, listening, and others considered to be largely ‘feminine’ virtues, should be accorded appreciation and not dismissed as inferior to being aggressive, loud, firm, strict, controlled, forceful, aloof, impersonal, and others considered to be largely ‘masculine’ virtues. They therefore call for an interrogation of gender roles and identities and of subtle forms of sexism to deepen our understanding of patriarchy and its beliefs. On the whole, radical feminists see their work as bringing about a cultural change which debunks stereotypes of women (and also, necessarily, of men).

Marxist feminism

Marxist feminists believe that the relationships between men and women as set up by capitalism encourage the oppression of women. The economic system (the ‘substructure’) and the legal system, politics, religion, education and the family (the ‘superstructure’) are all dominated by a patriarchal system of beliefs. In a capitalist system the traditional work of women (reproduction, caring, nurturing, homemaking) is devalued and subordinated to men’s work outside the home (production in business and industry). Marxist feminists argue that domestic work (the ‘second shift’) should be seen as paid work as many women also work outside the home. The patriarchal beliefs which see men’s work as more important considerably oppress women who work both inside and outside the home, and who at the same time have the responsibility for the spiritual, moral and emotional life of the family.

Marxist and socialist feminists draw attention to the fact that women’s work supports the home and the breadwinners who go out into the capitalist market place. In other words, if women were not at home keeping that end up (maintaining the family) then capitalism would founder because men would not be able to focus on work; they would have other duties to see about on the home front. These feminists also argue that women take up the responsibility when, with the vagaries and contradictions inherent in capitalism, their menfolk become unemployed or their wages decrease.

Women find jobs, of whatever kind, to continue to nurture and maintain the family unit. And it is this unit upon which capitalism depends to reproduce the next generation of workers. They argue for the recognition of women’s place in the economy, and moreover point out that women experience gender stratification (inequality based on being female) as well as social stratification.

A group known as Black feminists disagree with radical feminists on the patriarchal foundations of social class stratification and believe more attention should be given to the inequalities suffered through *ethnic stratification*. This is particularly relevant to the Caribbean situation. Whatever the particular feminist framework, feminist thought has one aim: the emancipation of women and men from unequal and oppressive relationships.

History of feminism

Feminist thought developed in a series of waves from the nineteenth century onwards and is still being refined and reworked. The *suffragette movement* which arose in England in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, when women campaigned for equality in political rights, focused attention on feminist thought. Over time, the women’s movement recognised that voting rights did not confer on them other forms of equality. So they began to study and research the nature of the inequality they experienced relative to men. Feminist thought eventually developed into a wide-ranging theoretical framework which accommodates different positions on the nature of equality in society. In fact, the theoretical positions are sometimes at odds with each other, and feminist theorists often do not belong exclusively to one school of thought but work in overlapping traditions.

One major criticism made by feminist theorists has been that to a large extent research has been focused on the experiences of males – Kohlberg’s theory of moral development was built up based on only males as subjects, for example. It is clear from such work that researchers believe that what males experience can be generalised to females. Thus, sociological research has ignored women and the main area of women’s work – the home and family and issues related to domestic relationships. Feminists are attempting now to correct this *malestream* view of the social world.

14.4.3 Caribbean Feminism

While feminism is dominated by women and the study of women’s lives, there are also male feminists, and feminists (both male and female) now extend their studies to include men who are oppressed by other men.

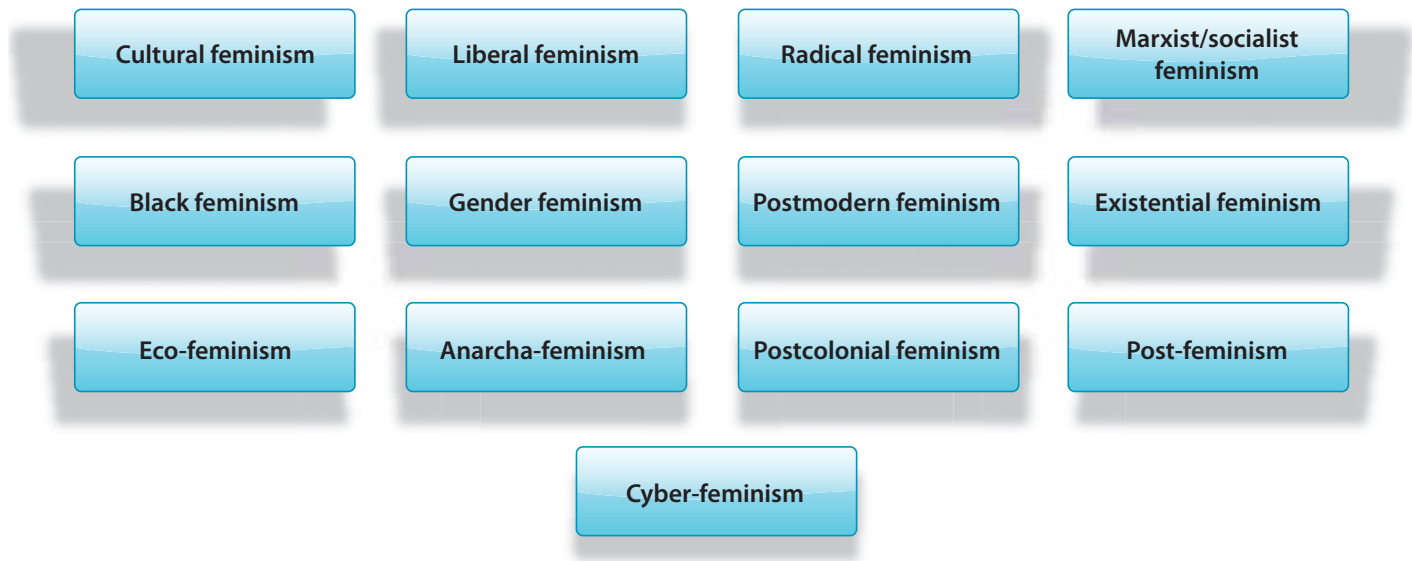


Fig. 14.13 Examples of different approaches to feminist theory

Caribbean feminists are not in full agreement with the liberal, radical and Marxist feminists abroad. They see the concerns and issues of women in the Caribbean as differing from those of white, western, middle-class women. For example, ‘woman’ tends to be a uniform concept in white, western scholarship. However, women in the Caribbean are fractured into different social groups based on race, ethnicity and social class, and because of this membership they suffer different levels of oppression. Intersections of gender, race and class, then, comprise a prism in which to study feminist issues in the Caribbean.

Engendered history

One of the main concerns of Caribbean feminists is to produce a realistically *engendered history* of the region, one that opposes the traditional focus on male-dominated activities in history such as war, government, diplomacy, economy and religion. Bridget Brereton (1999), a historian concerned with feminist issues, has sought to uncover the parallel lives of women in Caribbean history through unconventional sources – diaries, journals, memoirs, autobiographies, narratives, letters and archived documents. These flesh out traditional accounts by showing how historical events impacted on (and were influenced by) a group which has been silenced by men’s writing of history. Some of her sources include:

- autobiographies and memoirs of Mary Prince (Bermuda/Antigua, 1831) and Yseult Guppy Bridges (Trinidad, 1980);

- diaries and journals of Eliza Roberts (Jamaica, 1805) and Maria Nugent (Jamaica, 1801–1805);
- letters of Elizabeth Fenwick (Barbados, 1814–1821) and Eliza Elleston (Duchess of Chandos, Jamaica, 1737–1813).

No study of male–female relationships in the Caribbean would be satisfactory without reference to the historical experiences of colonialism, slavery, indentureship and independence. Slavery in particular has been the focus of feminist inquiry to throw light on contemporary relationships within the Afro-Caribbean family. For example, contrary to traditional historical accounts, it is now fairly certain, especially in the era after the abolition of the slave trade (1807 in the British territories), that slave families as nuclear units did exist. This contributes to the debate (outlined in Chapter 6) about whether African family patterns in the Caribbean are an African retention, were shaped by plantation slavery or represent a response to poverty. These three theses in various ways attempted to explain the prevalence of non-nuclear types of family arrangements among African Caribbean people today. The more gendered understanding of the enslaved which now comes about from feminist historians shows that the nuclear family is very much a part of this mix and not an anomaly.

Hilary Beckles (1997), studying enslaved women in Barbados, was able to show that they continually rebelled against and resisted their condition, yet their lives have gone unreported. It is clear that leaving women out of

the historical picture skews what we know of as history. Slavery degraded women and womanhood, forcing aspects of resistance in specific forms, and with women at times offering loyalty in return for protection and privileges, at other times running away, committing murders or supporting revolutionary action. Armed rebellion was rarer. The more ordinary day-to-day anti-slavery activities were the normal actions to weaken the slave system and hasten its collapse (Stubbs, 1999, p 119).

Caribbean feminists, through a study of history, say that the issues concerning white, western women differed considerably from those of the gender system in the Caribbean. For example, in the white, western world men were the traditional breadwinners and women were tied to domestic roles, with little support from a family network. Their pursuit of careers or work outside the home was criticised because of their role as mothers. Caribbean women, however, especially from the lower classes, were more often the consistent breadwinners as well as the dominant adults in the home. They had help from a wide network of family and friends. Nevertheless, being powerful in the home did not translate into being powerful in the public domain. A continuing trend in Caribbean feminist study has therefore been the issue of power.

Power

Feminists find that the gendered relations existing between men and women are organised in both subtle and not so subtle ways in order to maintain patriarchy or male dominance. One of their aims, then, is to explore how power exists within gendered relationships. They feel that theories to date which attempt to explain the formation of gender identities and gendered behaviours as 'benign socialisation' (Barriteau, 2003, p 4) leave out the domain of power within gender relations. 'Benign' descriptions of gender socialisation are those which tend to make the process seem neutral and harmless. Feminists want to call attention to how gender ideologies are passed on within a gender system where males hold more power than females. It is not an unbiased process and feminists want to expose the gender stereotypes and biases which are passed on because of this very imbalance in power.

For example, Box 14.16 describes a study by Tracy Robinson (2003) in which she examines how citizenship in the Caribbean has been built on an image of males as the ideal citizens and, even when it is stated in the constitution that there is gender equality, the laws are based on men's lives. Thus, the gender ideology which

says that men are the more powerful and dominant of the species has imbued the creation of Caribbean constitutions and its laws perpetuate this imbalance in power. Box 14.17 continues the theme of analysing the relations of power between the sexes by studying the now famous thesis of male marginalisation. Feminists criticise the theory, based on the power men continue to wield in the society; they do not see any marginalisation taking place.

Fractured gender identities

The neat polarity between male and female evident in early feminist writings from the West was not meaningful for the Caribbean, where each gender was fractured into racial affiliations (African, Indian, white, Chinese, Amerindian, mixed, and so on), ethnic and religious groupings (Christian, Hindu, Rastafarian etc.), urban/rural populations, social class divisions and age

BOX 14.16

Gendered citizens

As a feminist lawyer, Tracy Robinson was interested in how the issue of gender equality was represented in Caribbean constitutions and legal systems. Although the various constitutions stipulated that women were equal citizens before the law, she was able to show that the notion of 'citizenship' was derived from a model which was more relevant to men than women. This raised the interesting question of whether women were lesser citizens than men.

Robinson used as an example the case of Guyana, which makes it clear in its constitution that all women and men are to enjoy equal rights. This was tested in the courts in 1982 when a Guyanese woman could not get the court to rule in her favour that her foreign-born husband was a 'dependant' and therefore could live in Guyana. However, the foreign-born wife of a Guyanese man could be deemed a 'dependant' and live in Guyana. The law was based on a notion of a woman as being dependent on her husband but not the other way round. The power of the patriarchal system of gender relations which dominated the lawmakers and judges could not admit that a man should claim such subordinate status as a 'dependant'. This meant that Guyanese men and women were *not* equal citizens.

BOX 14.17 Caribbean feminists and the male marginalisation theory

As we saw in Chapter 10, Professor Errol Miller believed that processes at work in Caribbean societies were cutting men off from achieving a better standing in the community, and that women were benefiting from this – women from all groups and social classes.

Black women in Jamaica did not become teachers because they demanded such opportunity ... They did not actively seek to replace men as teachers. The women who would benefit and the colleges for female teachers that would grow as a result of the decision had done nothing to cause this outcome. They were the only innocents in the matter. Unknowingly, the black woman was being recruited by the ruling minority as an ally against the black man. (Miller, 1994, pp 94–95)

Caribbean feminists have been quick to contradict Miller's thesis by showing that even if more females are enrolled in educational organisations and obtain higher qualifications and better jobs, that does not mean they go on to hold positions of power and leadership. The issue, as feminists see it, is one of power. Patriarchal gender ideologies continue to be dominant whether or not women are more successful now than before. And women, whether they are successful or not, have to deal with patriarchal domination at home and in the

workplace. The system of patriarchy does not wither away because more women are accessing social mobility. As Box 14.16 shows, the gender system is so enmeshed in patriarchy that even the question of who is a citizen is a gendered issue. Feminists go on to say that only those who hold the ideology of male dominance dare will interpret the success of women as the marginalisation of men. This is a binary or polar view which sets the genders up as opposites, with one being necessarily dominant and the other subservient.

Barriteau (2003) has a different view about why some men seem to be marginalised and suggests that

...It is time to analyse the content of the gender identities that boys and men acquire as part of the larger gender ideologies circulating in gender systems in our society. These gender ideologies are embedded in relations of dominance. They are relations of power that play out between women and men, but also, significantly, between men and men. (p 340)

In effect, Barriteau is saying that patriarchy may be ultimately most destructive to men as it stipulates ideologies of manhood which prevent them from exerting efforts for success or forming meaningful relationships, or expressing themselves in a variety of ways.

categories. Caribbean feminists are interested in studying how all these intersections of age, race, class, ethnicity, geographical location and historical experience come together to create and perpetuate gender ideologies, gender identity and gender socialisation within and between different groups.

One example of this interest is shown in the study of the Indian community in Trinidad and how they relate to the longer-established African, the groups being of equal numbers. Both groups have different gender systems and ideologies. The Indian community is overtly and historically patriarchal, with women playing a subservient role to men. The African group is matrifocal, with women enjoying much autonomy. This is not to say that patriarchy is not present. In fact, the prevailing ideologies about the superiority of men are found in the African community and are widespread in the power relations between men and women, but they are not as

explicit as in the Indian community. For urban Christian Indians, and for all groups, whether Muslim or Hindu, the traditional, explicit patriarchal structure has gradually been eroded as education, in particular, has levelled the playing field between males and females. What feminists note is that in this 'mix' of cultures, where ethnic groups still live a somewhat polarised existence and vote differently, Indian females have been adopting gender ideologies modelled by the African group. This has exacerbated the culture of competition between Indian and African masculinities, with the former seeking to resist forms of creolisation in a bid to control the sexuality of Indian women. Interculturation could be the process whereby the gender ideologies of African women are gradually being adopted by Indian women.

Rampersad (1998) suggests that the struggles of Indian women against patriarchy could be more successful if they played more of a role in breaking

down the ethnic polarity which exists between Indians and Africans. Here gender and ethnicity interweave. If the Indian woman becomes more involved in politics, in literature, in drama and the arts, from which she is conspicuously absent, then she will be moving that much closer to being as active and involved in social life as African and other women. Under the patriarchal system practised by Indians, women were almost never allowed into the public sphere. While education has removed many barriers, there is still a dearth of Indian women in public life. Feminists suggest, then, that the more Indian women are integrated into all aspects of life in the society, the more resources they will have to resist the structures which have traditionally kept them subordinated. Others argue that the traditional values to which Hinduism and Islam appeal will continue to construct the Indian woman in a conservative mould.

ACTIVITY 14.5

1. a. 'Feminism tends to have a negative image.' Conduct a class debate on this motion with respect to your own country.
b. As a follow-up to the debate, discuss why feminism has a negative image in some countries.
2. Outline what a study of patriarchy in your country might reveal and write this up as a report for your local newspaper or as a letter to the authorities.
3. Examine the situation in your country in relation to what Miller has said about *male marginalisation*. To what extent do you believe that this phenomenon exists?



SUMMARY

Caribbean feminists are in the forefront of the intellectual movement contributing to an understanding of patriarchy. The fractured nature of identities in the Caribbean gives us a unique insight into the complexities of patriarchy as a system of male oppression. Not only does patriarchy oppress males considered to be the 'other' (those who are poor, of another race or sexual orientation) and females of different socioeconomic brackets and ethnic groupings differently, but also there are intersections of race and class: for example, poor Indian females and poor African females are each affected in different ways. Finally, there is scope and space for women to reduce the power of patriarchy if they can transcend traditional caste and class lines and form alliances with other women and men who are similarly oppressed.

14.5

Indo-Caribbean thought

This section looks at the body of writing and scholarship produced by Indians in the Caribbean, and others who have studied Indo-Caribbean thought (Box 14.18), to isolate its main concerns. Guyana, Trinidad and Suriname have the largest concentrations of Indians in the region. In Guyana and Trinidad there are two major ethnic groups, the Indians and Africans, while in Suriname there are significant numbers of at least four ethnic groups – the Hindustanis or East Indians, the Creoles or Africans, the Javanese or Indonesians and the Bush Negroes or Maroons (see Fig. 2.10).

14.5.1

Identity Issues

A dominant theme among Indians is the struggle to make sense of strong ethnic loyalties in a context where there are calls for a national identity. Unlike the African group, Indians have retained many of their cultural norms and practices, many pertaining to the religions of Islam and Hinduism. While most Indians today accept western dress (other than when they go to the temple or mosque), religion still prescribes a code of conduct, rituals, food preparation and the authority of the pundit or the imam in domestic affairs. More importantly, custom and religion come together to reinforce *endogamy* – the practice of choosing prospective wives or husbands from the group



Fig. 14.14 Guyanese Indian woman in traditional clothes

BOX 14.18 Indo-Caribbean writing

Well-established Indo-Trinidadian writers such as V.S. and Shiva Naipaul, Samuel Selvon and Ismith Khan, and equally well-established Indo-Guyanese writers Clem Secharan and David Dabydeen, have together explored the major themes that concern Indo-Caribbean people. Most if not all have written about the Caribbean while in the diaspora – the metropolitan centres of Britain and Canada. Collectively they have explored what it is like to grow up in traditional Indian families, interfamily dynamics (especially in an extended family dominated by men), inter-ethnic relations with other groups in the society (whites, Africans, Portuguese), the legacy and traditions of India and how they are creolised in the Caribbean setting, the dilemmas of being Indian in a ‘foreign’ land, the theme of transience and how migration to the UK or Canada does not solve these issues but doubles the tensions. Their language, the tone and rhythms and the humour reflect their Caribbean heritage, even while their characters wrestle with problems of identity, placelessness and a sense of hopelessness.

Recently, Indo-Caribbean female writers have been seeking to redress the situation of male

writers portraying their lives. They desire to speak of the ‘spaces’ that occur under patriarchy, which they have seized to realise more of their potential through subtle and subterranean manipulation of circumstances. Many do this by way of autobiographical fiction – and they explore hitherto taboo subjects such as sexuality and lesbianism as well as mixed race heritage – enabling them to bring multiple perspectives and identities to bear on Caribbean life. On the other hand, they also explore in full-length novels situations which are familiar to a Caribbean audience, such as political tyranny and the dark side of the tourist industry. Some of these writers include:

- Ramabai Espinet: *The Swinging Bridge, Nuclear Seasons*;
- Oonya Kempadoo: *Tide Running, Buxton Spice*;
- Shani Mootoo: *Out on Main Street, Cereus Blooms at Night*;
- Lakshmi Persaud: *Raise the Lanterns High, Butterfly in the Wind*;
- Narmala Shewcharan: *Tomorrow is Another Day*.

(caste, class or clan). Thus, Hindus are expected to marry Hindus (of like standing or caste) so that the traditions and ethnic ideologies are passed on from one generation to another; similarly, Muslims marry Muslims. However, in the context of the Caribbean and the imbalance of females to males during indentureship, society and culture could not be recreated exactly as in India. The caste requirement had to be abandoned and Hindus and Muslims also intermarried. Although relationships and marriages across ethnic lines, between Indian and Africans, continue to be rare, there is a significant ‘mixed’ population in Trinidad, more so than in Guyana.

As a result, the ethnic loyalties of Indians to their ancestral country remain strong. Some Indo-Caribbean writers say that these ties are ‘imagined’ – they reside in customs, traditions and beliefs about India, not many people having been to India; to fifth- and sixth-generation Trinidadians and Guyanese, India is remote. Ties to India are really a commitment to maintaining a way of life in the Caribbean which continues the ancestral traditions. It is seldom acknowledged that these ties are tenuous, and so in the struggle over identity there are

painful questions – if ethnic loyalty to India and ‘things Indian’ is dwindling among the younger generations, what does being ‘Indian’ mean in Trinidad or Guyana? If creolisation and interculturalisation have been going on for some 150 years, what is Indian culture? For example, Desmangles et al. (2003) say:

Hinduism in Trinidad ... cannot be said to be an Asian religion that has been transplanted. Through the years, it has evolved differently in the Caribbean than its counterpart in South Asia. It developed new myths, as well as rituals and festivals (such as the annual Holi Pagwa) that bear few resemblances to those of India; they are original to the region. (p 272)

Are ethnic loyalties necessarily at odds with a national identity? Given the above questions, how should Indians work out their commitment to a Caribbean nation when they have always been treated as transients?

Indians were brought to the Caribbean in the nineteenth century and entered an already established society. Africans had been there for three hundred years or more and the society was organised around European

values and norms. In the aftermath of Emancipation, Africans could have worked on the plantations if they were paid well enough, but Europeans did not intend to support a free peasantry which was paid a fair wage. Hence, the indentured scheme was designed to resurrect a cheap and exploited labour supply dependent on Europeans. The Africans looked on the Indians as scab labour and the Indians felt utterly alien in a foreign land. Moreover, they were kept on the estates, away from the towns where Africans predominated, and they were penalised by vagrancy laws if they travelled. Their low wages meant that they were constantly indebted to the European master. They kept their children out of education as they were mistrustful of it. Europeans, then, did not give the Africans and Indians a chance to unite, instead exploiting their natural distrust in order to maintain a pool of lowly paid labour wholly under their control. It helped with social stability, too, to have the large numbers of Africans and Indians, both exploited groups, distrusting each other. Indo-Caribbean writers today analyse the continued polarity among the races and discuss why, once colonialism had ended, the African and Indian populations did not sink their differences to make a success of independence (Box 14.18).

◆ **Read one or more of the books listed in Box 14.18 and make a list of the classic Caribbean situations against which the narratives are set.**

14.5.2 Citizenship Issues

A national discourse took place in the newly independent Caribbean countries of Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana which sought to weigh the claims of both groups to citizenship. No group felt, on independence, that they were equal as citizens. Africans thought that their long history of settlement and suffering gave them a prior claim as the authentic citizens of these lands. Indians attested to their own work in building the agricultural sector and rescuing the colony in the aftermath of Emancipation. The situation was exacerbated by a feeling among Africans that they should have been granted land on Emancipation, as happened at the end of the indentured period. On the whole, in both territories Africans felt a sense of superiority over the new Asian immigrants because they had had access to education, Christianity and British civilisation.

This discourse led only in the direction of increasing polarisation between the two ethnic groups, who later

both sought to form political parties and governments where one ethnicity dominated. The Westminster system (see Chapter 6) allowed one party to obtain all the rewards and perquisites which a government in office could enjoy, such as appointment to powerful boards, controlling funds and tenders and developing a system of patronage. Having lost an election, the opposition parties knew that their members would be marginalised and sidelined in the contest for work and rewards. Hence, elections were keenly contested, with many charges of fraud, especially in Guyana where, with a majority Indian population, Forbes Burnham and the People's National Congress (PNC) – an Afro-Guyanese party – were repeatedly returned to power. Thus, who is a genuine citizen and who has rights to the national 'cake' become contested issues when ethnic relations become polarised.

ACTIVITY 14.6

1. Describe what kind of power-sharing strategies Guyana and Trinidad might adopt to reduce exclusion and marginalisation of ethnic groups.
2. Do you agree that a strong ethnic identity in a country with several ethnic groups prevents the development of a national identity?

Indo-Caribbean social scientists and others have made a study of cultural pluralism and ethnic relations in the southern Caribbean to illuminate the issue of contested citizenship. Premdas (1998), in his study of Guyana, showed that in the lead-up to independence there was a 'moment' when the African and Indian community came together in one party under the leadership of Burnham and Cheddi Jagan. However, personal conflicts, habitual ethnic loyalties and Jagan's announcement of his communist beliefs led to external intervention, the ascendancy of the PNC under Burnham and the increasing exclusion of Indians from all positions of power and influence. Openly ethnic violence (approaching civil war in its extent) ensued during 1963 and 1964, as well as violent incidents in the following years as elections continued to be rigged and people were traumatised by a campaign of terror.

Premdas (1998) observed that while politicians exploited inter-ethnic rivalries freely to promote their own ends, there was a point beyond which there is only hate, when it becomes difficult to pull back and the country disintegrates. Those who are disenfranchised descend into poverty or migrate. Various sectors of the

economy collapse and the group in power increasingly becomes the target of its own members, who suffer in the deteriorating conditions. Repression and terror now have to be employed against them. The troubles in Guyana led to an examination of the question: what makes a society cohere?

Although the situation in Trinidad has not descended into open ethnic violence, the political parties seem to be treading a similar road. The solutions offered point to some strategy of power-sharing, which is very difficult to establish in a climate of racial animosity. Even now, after more than 30 years of independence, when Indians outnumber Africans in both Trinidad and Guyana, their citizenship is still contested. Both in their minds and in the minds of the African group, the tensions arising from their strong ethnic affiliation as Indians are difficult to reconcile with a national identity. Birbalsingh (2004), however, cautions against an ideology which promotes national identity over ethnicity: for example, the thinking which says if you declare yourself Guyanese, rather than Indo-Guyanese or Afro-Guyanese, this solves the problem. He says: 'This is a piece of dangerous, if well-meaning, nonsense that needs to be smartly scotched; it is mere wishful thinking that seeks to erase fundamental feelings and attitudes entrenched in Guyanese history' (pp 56–7).

◆ Do you agree with this view stated by Birbalsingh? Carry out some research to see whether such an approach has been successful in another country (whether Caribbean or not) with similar ethnic problems.

SUMMARY

Indo-Caribbean thought is bound up with investigating ideologies of ethnic identity in a Caribbean context. There are continued efforts to interrogate what it means to be 'Indian' as opposed to 'African' in Caribbean society. Some feel that a creole-centred Caribbean identity is as alien to them as an Afro-centred identity. Their efforts, though, to present an authentic Indo-Caribbean identity are complicated by the fact that some creolisation has already taken place. For both Guyanese and Trinidadians the issue continues to be worked out; how one bears one's ethnicity may in the final analysis be open to individual choice.

14.6

Indigenous perspectives

Descendants of the early peoples of the Caribbean Basin are found today in significant numbers in Guyana, Belize, Dominica and Suriname (see Boxes 4.3 and 4.4) and in small numbers in Trinidad and St Vincent and the Grenadines. Their stories and myths, as well as their activist stance in seeking to protect their rights, tell us something about their perspectives. In Dominica, which has a total population of 70 000 people, there are about 3000 Carib Indians. The Carib Territory was established in 1903 as a 3700-acre (1480 ha) homeland for the Caribs and today it is still owned as communal lands.

14.6.1 Tribal Groupings

The Amerindians of Guyana (numbering about 40 000) are scattered throughout the interior of the country in at least 65 reserved areas. The entire Guyanese population numbers about 800 000. There are nine tribal groupings among the Amerindians (see §4.1.2) and they live in different regions (Fig. 14.15), many of them still waiting to have official confirmation of their land titles.



Fig. 14.15 Amerindian groups in Guyana

In Belize, where there are about 280 000 people, 48.7 per cent are Mestizos (mixture of European and Amerindian), 24.9 per cent are Afro-Creole, 10.6 are Maya, 6.1 per cent are Garifuna (mixture of Africans and Caribs from St Vincent) and 9.7 per cent represent other groups such as the Mennonites, Indians, Syrians and recent Central American immigrants. There is a continuum among the Amerindians as a group – those who strongly identify with their Amerindian heritage at one end and those who prefer to identify with the other ethnic group or groups to which they belong at the other. To a large extent, then, the Garifuna and the Maya (Mopan, Kekchi and Yucatec) represent the most important Amerindian groups in Belize, and it is to these groups we look to learn about indigenous perspectives (Box 14.19).

14.6.2 Deconstructing Myths

The indigenous peoples of the Caribbean are seeking to change a powerful myth which Europeans created about them, to the effect that they are extinct or that the small surviving populations are not ‘pure’ Amerindians. While millions of indigenous peoples suffered genocide at the hands of the Europeans, indigenes today are saying that it was in the interest of the Europeans to construct a myth that the original peoples had more or less disappeared.

- On the basis of this myth a case was made for slavery.
- Later on this same myth gave European capitalists the freedom to move into ancestral territory and set up mining and timber industries as if there were no previous owner.
- The myth was deepened when those of mixed heritage were treated as if their Amerindian roots did not exist. Thus, there may be many more thousands of Amerindians in the Caribbean than are accounted for in censuses. And for some Amerindians today there is a reluctance to self-identify because of the stereotypes which are painted about native populations – lazy, dirty, subnormal, backward, and the like.

History texts have also played a part in portraying the indigenous inhabitants as passive and submissive (except for the Caribs, who were labelled as ‘cannibals’ – another myth justifying the intent to exterminate them). Accounts of the early history of Guyana showing the Amerindians making strategic decisions to resist the Spanish are not found in textbooks. The Amerindians allied with the Dutch, who provided guns, other weapons and training in manoeuvres and tactics. The Dutch were interlopers on the Spanish Main and the Amerindians’ fate seemed to be death or capture by the Spanish – hence their

alliance, which even allowed the Amerindians to launch attacks on Spanish monasteries and settlements. This aspect of Caribbean history, in which the Amerindians sought to actively defend themselves, is absent from the traditional historical record. It opposes the stereotype of the Amerindians as friendly, docile and unsophisticated.

In 2005 a controversial issue developed between the film company Disney and the indigenous peoples of Dominica. The second instalment of *Pirates of the Caribbean*, starring Johnny Depp, to be filmed in Dominica, sought to portray Dominica’s Carib Indians as cannibals. The Carib Chief Charles Williams held talks with Disney personnel, who refused to edit the script and insisted on continuing to perpetrate the myth of cannibalism which Europeans had created. The Caribs of Dominica received support from other indigenous groups around the world who, by publicising the issue, hoped to bring to world attention how indigenes are invariably ignored by mainstream society and capitalist interests.

14.6.3 Marginalisation

Indigenous peoples in the Caribbean tend to be the most marginalised in the society – socially, economically and politically. For example, Amerindians in Guyana point to a simple but telling observation: while Guyanese speak of being Afro-Guyanese and Indo-Guyanese, the Amerindians are considered to be a separate group, located far in the interior, thought to be ‘primitive’ and referred to as just ‘Amerindians’. Although they are the original inhabitants of this land, their strong ethnic ties to their ancestral heritage are viewed as something which makes them not authentic Guyanese. Here we see a bias in cases of national identity, conferring ‘true’ citizenship on those groups who were instrumental in the nationalist and independence movements. The attitude towards the Amerindians, then, is that they are inferior in some way and not true Guyanese.

Not surprisingly, Amerindians tend to be economically marginalised. Most of them live in poverty, battling disease, isolation and a lack of amenities. They tend to marry early and have large families. There is a high incidence of alcoholism. Few have opportunities to pursue secondary education because that involves travel to the coast or regional centres, where a child’s living expenses may be too high for the family to afford. In addition, there is a high drop-out rate as the young Amerindian students experience ostracism and discrimination from the coastal and urban cultures. The ‘coastlanders’ tend to feel that Amerindians are spendthrift and unable to manage money, hence their impoverished condition.

BOX 14.19 Belize: Indigenous perspectives

In Belize, the different ethnic groups are found in different parts of the country. The Mestizos are located in the north and west, the Creoles in the Belize district, the Mayan groups such as the Kekchi, Mopan and Yucatec live in the north and the Toledo district, and the Garifuna in the south in the vicinity of Stann Creek, Dangriga and Toledo (Fig. 14.16).



Fig. 14.16 The Amerindian population of Belize

The Garifuna and the Maya suffer similar kinds of injustices to those of other indigenes, such as the Amerindians of Guyana, and have resorted to similar strategies to fight for recognition and redress. First, they have formed advocacy groups as a focus for their cause and to win support – for example, the National Garifuna Council (NGC) and the Toledo Maya Cultural Council (TMCC) – and they are represented on the Caribbean Organization of Indigenous Peoples (COIP). Secondly, they

have formed alliances with groups which seek to promote the rights of indigenous peoples. An Inuit group from Canada (also an indigenous group) has helped to form an organisation known as the Belize Indigenous Training Institute (BITI), which offers training programmes to Maya and Garifuna people in order that they may take advantage of social and economic opportunities in the society.

Since the Maya lay claim to over 500 000 acres (200 000 ha) of Belize as their ancestral lands they have been constantly at loggerheads with the government, because the latter is only prepared to grant around 31 000 ha (77 000 acres) on nine separate reserves. The Maya complain that these boundaries were drawn without consulting them and that they fragment their land. Events came to a head, however, when the government granted logging rights to over 500 000 acres of land, including a great deal of territory claimed by the Maya, to two MNCs in Toledo district. The TMCC challenged this in the courts, claiming that the government's action was unconstitutional. Claims like these have become more numerous over the years and have been largely ignored by the government.

To increase the level of advocacy Mayan groups then sought to work through their international allies to have this and similar cases heard as a violation of human rights. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) researched the case and determined that the government had indeed violated the rights of the Maya and recommended that their right to traditionally occupied communal property be recognised. The government has been slow to respond to the report, and although some concessions have been made it continues to issue releases to timber and other companies to extract resources from Mayan ancestral territory.

The Garifuna people have different concerns from the Maya, though both are interested in the same thing – preserving their cultural heritage. A case in point is their language, which is formally taught only in a few places. Since few written records of the language exist and many Garifuna do not speak it in the urban areas and in the diaspora, it remains a language spoken only by a dwindling group. Garifuna culture on the whole is threatened by migration to the US and Canada as well as by the education system, which has failed to incorporate aspects of its language and culture into the curriculum. (See Box 16.1 for a view opposing the claims of Amerindian groups.)

The Amerindians, on the other hand, tend to focus on values which emphasise family life and communal ties rather than a savings ethic. With little in terms of capital accumulation, they have little power to influence the state. This becomes important as they struggle to have their rights recognised.

14.6.4 Land Rights

In Dominica, Guyana and Belize, the right of the original peoples to their lands has become a politically sensitive issue. This has forced the Caribs, Mayas and other groups into an activist and confrontational stance. When the Carib Chief in Dominica tried to oust from the Carib Territory non-Carib men who were consorting with Carib women this provoked a national debate, and the feeling was that no 'state within a state' could exist in the Commonwealth of Dominica. Although the Caribs had a right to their territory, they had to conform to the laws of the national government.

In Guyana the traditional rights of Amerindians to their ancestral lands have tended to be ignored by the government. In 1997 the Wai Wai, Wapishan and Kakushi peoples (Fig. 14.14) were increasingly concerned that mining and timber companies were infiltrating their lands but their repeated pleas to the government went unheeded. They formed the Couchau's Amerindian Council of Region 9 to defend their homeland from the activities of mining and forestry companies. The callous response from the government was that such a council amounted to treason and they were threatened with immediate legal action.

In Guyana the Amerindians have been engaged in a protracted struggle to have their claims to their ancestral lands formalised and recognised by the government. The Amerindian Act, which gave guidelines for land titling, was inadequate for the task. There were numerous complaints that the long delays in recognising claims allowed miners and loggers to freely enter ancestral lands and exploit their resources. There was also the claim that land titles tended to be distributed just before a general election. Amerindians, comprising about 8 per cent of the population, are seen as having potential influence in helping one of the two dominant political parties into power. The Act was redrafted in 2006 and can be downloaded from the Internet (www.amerindian.gov.gy/AMERINDIAN%20ACT%202006.pdf).

Also in 2006 Guyana, responding to international criticism about the inequalities suffered by the Amerindian peoples, submitted a report (overdue by 26 years) to the UN Committee on the Elimination of

Racial Discrimination (CERD). These developments are positive achievements won mainly by the Amerindian peoples and their supporters.

ACTIVITY 14.7

1. Identify ONE dominant belief from the list below which is directly linked to indigenous perspectives:
 - a. material success;
 - b. feminism;
 - c. nationalism;
 - d. spirituality;
 - e. political power;
 - f. separation.
2. Explain why a distinct separation exists in Belize, Guyana and Dominica between the world views of the indigenous inhabitants and those in mainstream society.
3. 'How can a country develop if its indigenous peoples are not committed to a capitalist ideology?' Discuss this question, keeping in mind that one of the 'development' goals of a country is equity for all its members.

14.6.5 Activism

Continued marginalisation and the lack of respect shown for their way of life have encouraged Amerindians to take a more activist stance in dealing with the wider community. They have been organising into pressure groups so that they can take issues to other organisations which may be able to help. The Amerindian Peoples Association (APA), representative of most of the tribal groups in Guyana, works closely with the Rainforest Foundation of the US, which provides assistance to develop self-sufficiency among the Amerindians. An important development occurred in 1999 when the Amerindian Legal Services Center (ALSC) was set up. This body now helps to bring some of the land rights cases to court, and occasionally to the international courts.

In November 2005 aboriginal populations all over the world mobilised to send representatives to the prestigious Summit of the Americas in Argentina. They worked on a declaration of rights to present to world leaders at the Summit, pressing for greater recognition for claims and rights, and for equity in job opportunities. They argued that the emphasis placed at that time on the projected FTAA gave too much focus to MNCs and capitalist concerns and ignored values such as spirituality, which form part of the indigenous peoples' world view.

SUMMARY

The perspectives of indigenous populations in the Caribbean show that they are primarily interested in preserving their rights and, by extension, the values they hold dear. While they have been ignored and sidelined in the past, there is now a militant and activist stance as well as research and scholarship into their history, culture and languages. They are supported too by world bodies advocating more recognition and restoration of the land rights of indigenous peoples. If this indeed comes to pass, then we are likely to see in the near future changes to our history texts and school curricula, and at the same time increased confrontation as governments try to mediate between the interests of mining and forestry companies (capitalist projects which boost the economy) and the claim of indigenous groups to extensive ancestral lands.



Wrap Up

The intellectual traditions of the Caribbean have been described as ideologies that have served to inspire people of the region to improve some conditions of social life which they felt were oppressive. These included racial ideologies (pan-Africanism and *négritude*) promoting black consciousness, economic ideologies which contrasted Marxism and capitalism, ethnic ideologies which explored the issue of belongingness among Indo-Caribbean peoples and the issue of threats to heritage among indigenous groups, and feminist philosophies which explained the oppression of women in a patriarchal system of gender relations. These philosophies translated not only into written works but also into the lives of great men and women, as well as the organisations and newspapers they founded. In cases such as the indigenous groups of the Caribbean, where the many languages remain unknown to mainstream Caribbean society, their ideologies can be determined by their art, their cultural traditions and by the actions they are taking to preserve their heritage.

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Research TOPICS

'Gender relations' is an issue where the data surround you. However, because it is so familiar a part of social life, it is not so easy to collect data. Participants tend to take it so much for granted that they cannot separate it out from their lives and talk about it meaningfully. If you are thinking about studying gender relations you should keep this in mind in how you structure your interview questions. It is a good idea to use questions which prompt people to speak at some length (so you can capture their ideas) rather than 'True/False', 'Yes/No' or forced-choice items.

If you wanted to examine some aspect of patriarchy or gender oppression you might try the following among your classmates or any group of your peers, both male and female.

- Give each person a list of about ten characteristics which people tend to stereotype as 'masculine' or 'feminine'. Ask them to say which ones they believe are typical of men and women and which are not easy to classify. Make sure at the end you know which response is from a male and which from a female. You also have to think hard about the ten characteristics you eventually choose. It is best not to include too many which feed in to prevailing stereotypes. You want to use attributes which, if a person finally says, for example, 'this is a male characteristic', the answer will tell you something about what that person thinks a male is like. For example, 'kind', 'dependable', 'determined' are some which may elicit a variety of answers. You may want to pre-test your list on friends first and discard some of your original items.
- In each case, once the person has completed the exercise, ask them about their reasons for making the selection that they did. Note the reasons: they may be in the form of stereotypes; they may indicate whether the person believes in the inherent superiority of one of the genders or vice versa; they may cite previous knowledge that they know of males or females like that; they may show a lot of ignorance about what it is like to be a person of the opposite gender; and so on.
- You can represent the first set of data in two bar graphs where the vertical axis represents how many were included in the study (e.g. 20 persons). The horizontal axis will be divided into ten sections for each of the characteristics. One graph could be named 'Perceptions of Femininity' and the other 'Perceptions of Masculinity'. Analyse these images.
- You will need to do qualitative data analysis (see Chapter 19) to show what the other data you have collected mean. For example, which were the characteristics that persons could not classify? Were they the same ones all the time? Could you interpret something from this? Did your results show no clear stereotypes? Can you account for this?
- Bring in the second set of data, where persons spoke about why they made certain choices – that should give you some in-depth understanding of how the genders think of each other.

Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Distinguish between pan-Africanism and négritude. (2 marks)
- (b) For ONE of these intellectual traditions, state TWO ways in which that tradition influenced Caribbean history. (4 marks)
- 2 (a) Give TWO characteristics of an ideology. (2 marks)
- (b) Using ONE specific ideology as an example, outline TWO ways in which it has influenced development in the Caribbean. (4 marks)
- 3 (a) State TWO beliefs which characterise the Rastafari. (2 marks)
- (b) Identify TWO ways in which pan-Africanism has influenced Rastafari beliefs. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) Distinguish between Marxist and neo-Marxist analyses. (2 marks)
- (b) State TWO reasons why Eric Williams's thesis about capitalism and slavery may be seen as a Marxist argument. (4 marks)
- 5 (a) Describe TWO objectives of Caribbean feminists. (2 marks)
- (b) Outline TWO ways in which these objectives may be achieved. (4 marks)
- 6 (a) Explain what is meant by 'patriarchy'. (2 marks)
- (b) Identify ONE aspect of patriarchy seen in the Caribbean. (2 marks)
- (c) Outline ONE way in which patriarchy is oppressive to both men and women. (2 marks)
- 7 (a) Define the term 'industrialisation by invitation'. (1 mark)
- (b) Name the theorist normally associated with this idea. (1 mark)
- (c) Outline TWO reasons why this idea is being revived in the twenty-first century Caribbean. (4 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Describe how pan-Africanism has influenced political movements in the Caribbean.
- 2 Outline the activities and intellectual thought of ONE Caribbean person whose ideological stance influenced development in the Caribbean.
- 3 Explain how the study of ideologies can contribute to an understanding of Caribbean development.
- 4 Describe the main tenets of dependency theory and explain its relevance to the Caribbean situation.
- 5 Distinguish between socialism and communism in Marxist theory. Describe attempts in ONE Caribbean country to put socialist policies into practice.

Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 Examine the argument that deep ethnic loyalties hinder the development of a strong national identity.
- 2 Analyse the relationship between pan-Africanism and Marxism, and suggest why pan-Africanists have found Marxist and neo-Marxist ideas attractive.
- 3 To what extent are Indo-Caribbean women 'doubly oppressed' in Caribbean society? Outline ONE solution to this problem.
- 4 Develop a reasoned position about what the future holds for the indigenous people of the Caribbean.

15

Roles and Functions of the Mass Media



Satellite dish in Jamaica

The chief role of the mass media has always been seen as the vehicle for widespread dissemination of information, and for entertainment. However, there are good reasons for viewing the media as underlying the construction of national, regional and diasporic identity, as well as promoting our common cultural experience and cultural exchange. We have seen (Chapter 13) that the mass media exert great influence on sport and its developmental potential. They also play other roles which are of importance in considering the issue of development in Caribbean countries.

For example, the media could be used as a means to confront the cultural imperialism of the US and Europe. Unfortunately, they are too often part of the problem as they feed off their cultural output and deliver a diluted version of particularly American culture into our homes. Lastly, the mass media are a central plank in the promotion and defence of citizens' rights and freedoms.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. define the mass media;
2. state the role and functions of the media in today's Caribbean;
3. describe the contribution of the mass media to development in the Caribbean;
4. understand the mass media's importance for cultural exchange;
5. discuss the relationship between the mass media and cultural imperialism.

15.1

Media of communication

'Media' is a shorthand way of referring to 'media of communication'. A medium of communication between two or more persons, or in small groups having face-to-face contact, may take the form of gestures, signals and language (oral and written). 'Mass media', on the other hand, refers to forms of communication organised to reach large audiences and includes radio, television, newspapers and the Internet. A medium of communication such as newspapers becomes a part of the mass media when it publishes information for the public. Publishing refers to the act of putting information out for public viewing. Traditionally, publishing was associated only with the print media (books, newspapers, magazines) but today one can publish on the Internet as well as publish music or computer software. By the same token, we should be able to say that radio and television 'publish' the news, but the term 'broadcast' is more often used. They are referred to as the broadcast media, though the term electronic media is also appropriate.

Fig. 15.1 shows the many terms used to classify the mass media today. Technological advances have transformed various media into multiple ways of delivery so that one form may now fall under overlapping labels. For example, the Internet and the World Wide Web are increasingly used for broadcasting and analysing news. Not only are there conventional newspapers publishing online editions but there is also the new phenomenon of blogging (see also §12.2.5). The discussion in a blog is often of high quality and alternative opinions and experiences may be expressed from those being portrayed in the 'mainstream' media. Very differently to how newspapers treat the news, bloggers often persist with a

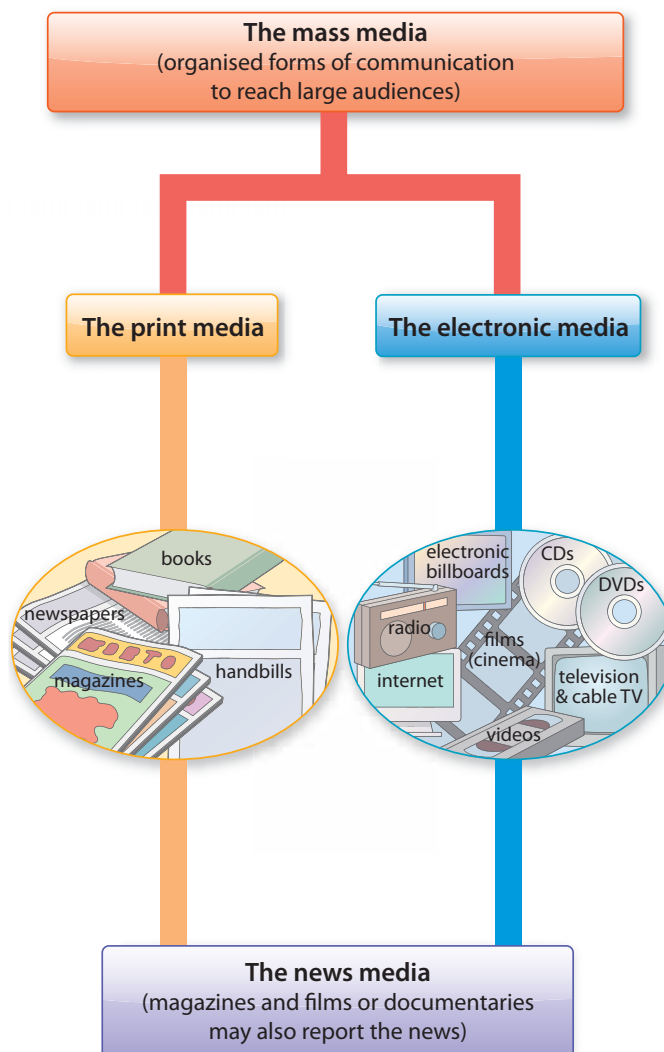


Fig. 15.1 Forms of the mass media

story, analysing all its aspects and consequences. Blogging covers an enormous range of topics, from entertainment, celebrity following and general information to political debate and activism.

Thus, the Internet and the World Wide Web are an integral part of the 'news media', the 'electronic media' and the 'digital media' (computerised images and text). There is even Internet radio, making it part of the 'broadcast media' as well. It is also interesting to note that small personal items of electronic media such as webcams and cellular phones can network into computers and beam images which may find their way into the news. While all forms of media of communication are growing and developing in different ways, our region is increasingly immersed in the electronic and digital media – radio, television, video, film (cinema), CDs, DVDs and ICTs – and their increasingly sophisticated ways of coming together as multimedia.

15.2

The mass media and development

The mass media are so much a taken-for-granted part of Caribbean society and culture that their role in development is seldom analysed. To better understand their role today we should be aware of when they came into being in the region and for what purpose. The idea of 'mass' media points to the notion that the

masses (the 'common folk') should have the same access to information as the elites in the society. This would 'level the playing field' and all citizens would have the same information as a basis for action. Such ideas gained increasing popularity in the era of decolonisation leading up to independence (Box 15.1).

ACTIVITY 15.1

In the list below, try to identify the country associated with each newspaper. To what extent do their stated values inform what is included in their content?

- *The Gleaner* – to find out all things, even those hidden, to make sense of things;
- *The Nation* – all encompassing, for everyone; patriotic values;
- *The Advocate* – having a special position, or supporter for the people;
- *The Chronicle* – recording the truth impartially for purposes of transparency;
- *The Herald* – good news;
- *The Voice* and *The Express* – a forum for 'freedom of speech'.

Thus, in thinking about the mass media and development, we must be conscious of whose interests are being secured. Box 15.1 suggests that big business controls the news, although newspapers carry names that indicate their purpose to be one of hard-hitting

BOX 15.1

The 'mass' media: for the common folk?

In the decades before independence, newspapers, pamphlets and other print media were used to popularise ideas about equity and stir up support for the trade union movement, black consciousness and ultimately the struggle for independence. Local politicians realised that for democracy to be a success, the participation of the people was necessary, and so they had to have access to information. Newspapers, later radio, and after that television, were all harnessed to provide information to the masses. This was seen to be 'development' because people now had information about politics and other matters affecting their lives, which they could use to make decisions in the national interest.

Another view opposed this understanding of the mass media and development, suggesting that it

was a sanitised version of what really happens with the mass media. What is showcased as 'the news' (then and now) is a simplified version of events. In fact, what is included and what is discarded is very much someone's opinion about what others should know (and not know). To a large extent this criticism is aimed at big business today, which either owns media houses or supports the media with profitable advertising contracts. Business interests, then, control the media, which in turn manipulate the news which is beamed to 'the people'.

This critical view of the mass media says that they mislead the public. For example, newspapers continue to maintain their stance as bearers of truth for the common folk, images from the early days of the mass media, through the names they adopt.



Fig. 15.2 Newspapers are a popular form of mass media

investigative reporting which has the interests of poor people in mind.

The various forms of the traditional mass media – newspapers, television, radio and magazines – had specific audiences and material which tended to keep them distinct in the types of information they pervaded. Today all that has changed with ICTs, where Internet and computer technologies now network with radio, television, newspapers and other print media, as well as with electronic media such as DVDs and cell phones, to transmit any type of information globally. The pervasiveness of the mass media, and in particular the foreign mass media, in the Caribbean inevitably impacts on how we are conceptualising development. As a result, we should be aware that actively debating and discussing the role and function of the mass media in our context is a development issue.

The human development paradigm (Chapter 9) promotes an idea of development not just as economic progress but as increasing the levels of equity, productivity, empowerment and sustainability experienced by people. If the mass media, collectively a major social institution, are contributing to development in the Caribbean, then there should be some evidence that they are impacting positively on the equity, productivity, empowerment and sustainability experienced by Caribbean people. In this section the role and functions of the mass media are examined to determine whether, or how, they may be contributing to human development.

15.2.1 Behaviour Change

The mass media are considered to be a force in the development process because they provide citizens with information which helps them to be knowledgeable about a variety of areas that are important for them to lead a full and healthy life. If this is what the mass media are supposed to be doing we should be vigilant in examining what type of information they provide. Is it information which helps the population to keep healthy, or to better understand political and economic trends, or to improve their quality of life? In fact, we may well wonder to what extent the actual provision of information helps to change behaviours.

Caribbean people get information from a variety of media. The foreign mass media, such as cable and direct television and the Internet, compete with local television and radio stations as well as local newspapers. As a result, Caribbean people should be well informed about news, sport, politics, health, economic trends and other topical issues such as fashion, music and cinema. This information can be used in a variety of ways to help them make better choices and to enhance living conditions in the Caribbean. For example, a documentary on global warming might show what can be done to conserve energy use. An individual viewer may be struck by the relevance of such information to the Caribbean, especially the link with hurricane formation, and decide to reduce energy consumption on a daily basis. This would be an example of the mass media helping to change behaviours to those which are more environmentally friendly. A viewer acting on the information demonstrates empowerment – a sense of self-efficacy, that he or she can make a difference.

However, the mass media did not change that person's beliefs, values and attitudes. And another person looking at the same documentary might not have been similarly moved. While we may never know what causes someone to act on information received, we do know that the advertising industry seems to believe that repeated messages, subtle or otherwise, encourage people to buy. If that is so then we should be seeing the mass media using the same strategies to change behaviours when they broadcast programmes designed to give information about enhancing citizens' quality of life. To what extent do we see attractive presentations, using powerful images and graphics and a variety of formats, some of them entertaining, addressing issues such as drug and other forms of substance abuse, HIV and AIDS, teenage pregnancies, family life and low self-esteem?

It may be argued that television and radio are businesses. They might air documentary programmes if

they were produced by concerned authorities and were of high quality. What would be most important, however, is whether an advertiser would pay for the airtime. The basic point here is that the mass media, powerful as they are in influencing the public, are commercial enterprises which, for the most part, do not necessarily see their role and function as nurturing the human development capacity of citizens. To assume that the information-providing function of the media is all that is required to have a positive impact on behaviour is therefore misleading.

ACTIVITY 15.2

1. As a Caribbean person interested in promoting your country's development, what would you like to see (and in what proportions and at what times) aired as television programming? Compare your choices with those of another person, noting the arguments put forward.
2. If you read newspapers or visit blogging sites regularly, or listen to news and talk shows on the radio or television, what issues or events would you say you are more informed about? Reflect on whether, or how, that information has had any impact on your human development.

On a general note, perhaps it is instructive to be a spectator when people say they are debating an issue. On the air or in person there is more than a tendency to merely wait through someone's contribution which might oppose one's view (or even impatiently interrupt) with the intent of airing one's own opinion, which of course is the right one. What might be the reasons why we are reluctant to admit, far less consider, alternative views? Sociologists have suggested that how we are socialised makes us prone to engage in behaviours showing that we are superior to others, that our opinions make more sense, that other people are troublemakers and that the other political party cannot be trusted. This characteristic way of dealing with the world stems, sociologists say, from when we were growing up: our families did not celebrate human differences and show that other people had a view (or a religion) they considered valid. We have been socialised into an 'us and them' view of the world.

15.2.2 Provision of Information

A major function of the mass media is to disseminate information to citizens. In studying the relationship of the mass media to development, we must consider what information is transmitted and how that could contribute to development. Television, radio, newspapers and the

Internet provide a wealth of information, from politics, natural disasters, fashion, entertainment and cooking to the weather, astrology, economic and financial trends and exercise and health options.

Advertisements

Much of the information transmitted by the mass media is in the form of advertisements for goods and services. These ads are paid for by the businesses which choose a particular form of media to advertise their products. Advertisers bring in a lot of money so that their interests tend to be promoted where programming is concerned. For example, advertisers may not wish to buy advertising space during a television programme on the environment, preferring an American 'sitcom', as they believe that more people would be watching the foreign show. Without advertisers willing to buy the airtime, local productions which have educational content will disappear and we will lose access to valuable information.

 **In what other ways is the information (content, opinions) that is disseminated by the mass media influenced by advertisers?**

News

Newspapers, and television stations dedicated only to news coverage (such as Fox News and CNN), are the main ways in which news is disseminated, but radio stations, news magazines and Internet sites also broadcast the news. 'News' is defined as any happening in which people may be interested. This is important to remember in considering whether the information given as news contributes to national development. For example, sometimes the mass media are accused of creating the news – inventing or speculating about developing stories in a manner calculated to keep the public interested. The obvious reason why they would do this is to keep people buying newspapers and tuning in to radio and television stations. The media industry is a business and the news itself can be sold many times over if it is protracted and packaged in different ways. We have witnessed this where a 'lead story' several days old is revitalised by having one or more experts come on the air to discuss the case. At this point we have to ask ourselves if it is still news, this unfolding 'footage' produced by the television station's news crew. And we do have to consider whether by the same token there may be groups and events which do not make the news at all (Box 15.2), as well as those (often very important) matters which get covered for a short period and are then dropped, even though they remain serious.

BOX 15.2

Who defines the news?

If we are concerned about human development we must ask certain questions about the news. For example, whose interests are continually reported on? Which groups do not get to air their concerns and grievances? Let us take newspapers. In Grenada, Dominica and Belize there are no daily printed newspapers, only weeklies. However, there are daily online newspapers such as *Ambergris Today*, produced in San Pedro, Belize. In other territories there are one or more dailies, a few weeklies and sometimes the 'evening news' or those published twice a week. There are even hard-hitting, openly critical newspapers targeting government officials and policies. *The Outlet* of Antigua and Barbuda ran from 1969 to 2004, but today the *Star* of St Lucia ('bringing the truth to light') and the *Mirror* of Trinidad and Tobago serve the same function. These newspapers do not necessarily favour the opposition but are inclined to give prominence to individuals and groups who are normally sidelined by the national daily newspapers.

For example, while crime may feature prominently in the widely circulated dailies and Sunday news-papers, it is a particular position about crime which is aired. The photographs, reports, editorials and articles focus on spiralling crime statistics, the details of criminal acts, the resources of the protective services and who may or may not be responsible (i.e. who is to blame). Opinions may range from inadequate parenting to the lack of good male role models, the failure of the education system, the incompetence of the police, the influence of the foreign mass media and the connections between officials and drug lords. Critics say that this is a middle-of-the-road, even middle-class, view of the news.

Those newspapers that offer an alternative view are concerned with giving the public additional information which they need to understand an

issue. However, they are often labelled as scurrilous and scandalous and can only stay in circulation as long as they attract advertisers. While some newspapers affect a 'tabloid' style, there are those which mainly focus on airing information which does not normally get published. For example, in the war against crime, certain places in a country are regarded as breeding crime, such as West Kingston in Jamaica and Laventille in Trinidad and Tobago. One will rarely see a newspaper which regularly gives a voice to people in these areas – to hear about job opportunities, their conditions of life, their take on the crime situation – because their views are often not the views portrayed in the mainstream media. They will more likely respond to those pointing at them to ask why they are not being employed, why their schools are not being improved, how are they supposed to live when public transport, ambulances, postal workers, delivery trucks and other taken-for-granted services do not venture into their area? They will also ask why their area and their people are vilified in the press when law-abiding citizens live there, young children, old people and enterprising adults desirous of making something of their lives.

These criticisms suggest that the mainstream media showcase a consensus approach to the news – the views and opinions of the powerful or elite groups. The mass media tend to bring in experts, specialists and professionals to discuss issues. This suggests that the opinions and experiences of those who live in the troubled areas are not as valid. These people may not be as articulate as the professionals, and moreover they may resort to argumentative and confrontational stances which do not have a place in polite debate. The 'news' that an underclass may generate, except for the fact of criminal activity, is not really considered newsworthy in the broadcast media.

ACTIVITY 15.3

1. Investigate regional disseminators such as the Internet-based *Caribbean News Now!* and *Caribbean Newspapers.com*. To what extent do they challenge the hegemony of the American news stations mentioned above? Would a print-based or TV-based news agency in the region be as successful?
2. Identify as many local radio and TV stations and print media as you can in your country or territory. How much local support do they enjoy?
3. 'News is really someone's version of what is important'.
 - a. Make a list of the topics/events which seem to be 'newsworthy' in your country.
 - b. Consider what gets reported and what seems to be ignored or sidelined.
 - c. Is there any basis for the statement made above?

15.2.3 A Free Press

Many people equate the growth of the mass media with a free press, seeing a free press as a positive sign that democracy is being enhanced. This can be traced to the decolonisation era when the mass media were supposed to assist in the process of popularising the cause of freedom (Box 15.1). If democracy is being enhanced by a free press, then certainly that would be evidence that human development is taking place. A free press suggests equity and that everyone has a right to express their views, so long as they do not commit acts of slander or libel (Box 15.3). This would mean that even marginal groups would have a voice in national affairs.

BOX 15.3 Libel and slander

In the mass media, when statements about people are published, the onus is on the publishing house to be certain that those statements do not **defame the character** of

Defamation of character refers to a lowering of the estimation of that person in the eyes of the public. If a statement is defamatory then that person could bring a case of libel against the publisher.

anyone in the mind of the public.

A distinction needs to be drawn between libel and slander.

- *Libel* refers to defamatory statements which are published in some permanent form (newspaper, television tapes, Internet sites).
- *Slander*, on the other hand, refers to a defamatory statement made while speaking.

Do you think Internet-based news media are governed by libel laws, slander laws, or neither?

Because of the libel laws, the mass media have to exercise responsibility and good judgement in deciding to publish statements which may threaten a person's good reputation. Many journalists see this as threatening the freedom of the press. However, if the statements are found to be true (or reasonable) by a court of law then the libel case can be thrown out.

The issue of whether we do have a free press in the Caribbean is a contentious one. The debate turns on who owns the media. In the decades after independence, governments slowly gave up their tight control of radio and television broadcasting because cable television and the foreign media were making it unprofitable to continue to run public broadcasting networks devoted to local news and events. In some Caribbean countries today governments still own at least one radio or television station or have majority shares, but to a large extent the local media houses are privately owned. Some business interests own both newspapers and radio and television stations so that there is a concentration of media ownership among private enterprise. Whether owned by the government, public corporations or private investors, in recent years the Commonwealth Press Union and the International Press Institute have recognised a gradual improvement in press freedom in the Commonwealth Caribbean. However, both Caribbean journalists and these international watchdog associations cite several issues which have compromised the freedom of the press in the region in the recent past (Box 15.4).

Press freedom is seen in different ways, depending on one's position. From the perspective of mass media workers the press in the Caribbean is not free. It would be free if (as in the US) the press had fewer restrictions to contend with in reporting on the actions of people in public life. From the perspective of government, on the other hand, the press is 'too free'. From the perspective of poorer groups in the society the press tends to be dominated by the views and perspectives of big business and middle-class attitudes. From the perspective of international watchdog sites, the press in the Caribbean enjoys a great deal of freedom because all newspapers and other media publish some forms of criticism of public officials and government policies (Box 15.5).

A major continuing issue which journalists have with their governments concerns the laws governing libel. There have been repeated calls to liberalise these laws. Journalists believe that the fear of unwittingly libelling someone causes them to be very circumspect in their language. And they must also be aware that laws still exist prohibiting certain information from being made public. For example, in Belize financial disclosure statements submitted by public officials cannot be questioned; if that happens, in the print media or otherwise, the offending journalists can be fined or jailed. This encourages self-censorship among journalists. To improve this situation journalists want:

BOX 15.4

Harassment of the press

Trinidad and Tobago

During Basdeo Panday's term in office as prime minister, the press endured a relentless campaign of harassment:

- In 1996 Panday called for the removal of *Guardian* editor Jones P. Madeira from office for alleged 'bias'. In an editorial, Madeira had asked the prime minister to prove his allegations that the opposition PNM (People's National Movement) was planning to destabilise the government. Madeira was asked by his bosses, a business cartel, to resign.
- In 1997 Ken Gordon brought a charge of slander against the prime minister for calling him a 'pseudo racist' in front of a large political gathering. Gordon was head of media house Caribbean Communications Network (CCN). It was widely believed that the attack came about because of Gordon's opposition to the government's Green Paper on media reform – that it was too controlling of journalists. Gordon won the suit and the appeal in court, though the settlement was reduced.
- In 1998 the work permit for Barbadian journalist Julian Rogers was not renewed and there was widespread speculation that it was because he incurred the displeasure of the prime minister by airing on a call-in television programme, *Morning Edition*, content which opposed the government.

Antigua and Barbuda

The Bird family dominated politics in Antigua and Barbuda for three decades: Vere Bird, founder of the Antigua Labour Party (ALP) was prime minister from 1981 to 1994, when he was succeeded by his son, Lester Bird. There have been many attempts during that time to control the media:

- In 2001 virtually all the media were in the control of the Bird family. However, *Observer Radio*, the first independent radio station, began to broadcast after years of trying to obtain a licence. In 1996 it had been shut down the day after it began broadcasting. (This is very similar to events in Trinidad and Tobago in 2005 when a new local television station – Cable News Channel (CNC) – was prevented from broadcasting four hours before it was due to go on air by the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT) who stated that it was in breach of regulations.)
- In 2002 the Barbadian journalist Julius Gittens, host of a news programme called *The Big Issue*, was hastily expelled from the country, ostensibly because he did not pay for his work permit. Even though a receipt was produced he was told that he could not be reinstated because there was a new rule whereby only two non-nationals could work in any media house. Many believe it was because discussions on the show called for inquiries into government misconduct.
- In 2002 the *Observer* recorded an interview with a 14-year-old girl alleging that she had had sexual relations with the prime minister and was a drug courier to him. This videotape was apparently leaked to the public and Prime Minister Lester Bird sued the *Observer* for libel. The *Observer* was next threatened with closure for not paying millions of dollars in back taxes. (A government position paper on the issue can be viewed at http://www.antigua-barbuda.com/business_politics/pdf/government_statement_videotape_affair.pdf.)

- freedom of the press enshrined in the constitution and not just freedom of expression, as is the case now in most Caribbean countries;
- laws which protect them from any libellous content in the news items they use that have been sent to them by other news or wire services;
- laws which protect them in criticising public institutions and government officials;
- enforcement of laws guaranteeing their freedom of movement throughout CARICOM.

ACTIVITY 15.4

Today the Barbados 1996 Defamation Act is considered a model piece of legislation which other Caribbean governments should follow.

1. Find out what are the basic provisions of this Act.
2. Suggest why other Caribbean governments are 'dragging their feet' in implementing similar legislation.

BOX 15.5**Investigative reporting**

Investigative reporting is regarded as the pinnacle of journalistic practice. The example is often cited of the two reporters in the US (and an informant, Deep Throat) who played a central role in unravelling the Watergate scandal in the early 1970s, which eventually toppled the presidency of Richard Nixon. Investigative reporting is also seen as the hallmark of a free press. Reporters are free to pursue a story and follow leads from individuals, protecting their sources and, in a systematic way, going after those persons involved in crime or a cover-up so that the media are actually involved in detecting and solving crimes.

Journalists in the Caribbean find that they are unable to do in-depth investigative reporting. Much of their news coverage actually represents a response to something that is happening (a press conference, a budget speech) to which they have been invited, or an event or incident (murder, robbery, fire, strike) which they are called upon to report in a routine way. While journalists cite the libel laws as the main reason for their

caution in reporting crime, they also mention that building up evidence and exposing, for example, corruption in the media is a far cry from getting a conviction in a court of law. The latter operates on the 'presumption of innocence' and the long and protracted court battles often end in victory for the defendants.

Journalists also point to the political culture where people are unwilling to give up information which may incriminate members of their own party. In a highly politicised culture, generations of one family are sometimes loyal to one political party, come what may. In addition, the private and business interests which may own the media play a role in what is investigated and what is not.

◆ **Reflect on any examples of investigative journalism which you know about in your territory – to what extent does that kind of reporting occur?**

15.2.4 Entertainment

Another major function of the mass media is entertainment, and indeed a good deal of programming in the electronic media is devoted to entertainment. The mass media entertain through the music played, the movies, soap operas, music videos and talk shows aired, the celebrity interviews and the feature stories about topics as varied as cooking, fashion, natural wonders, tourist destinations, technological breakthroughs and home decorating. Some of these, as well as documentaries, are referred to as 'edutainment' – informative and entertaining at the same time. To what extent does entertainment on the mass media contribute to development?

To be able to listen to music for enjoyment, and to look to the media for fun, laughter and relaxation, are important avenues for releasing stress and are part of a balanced existence. In this sense the mass media can be a source of recreation. The many comedies and attractively packaged shows – be they suspense thrillers, scary movies, football games, talk shows (Box 15.6), concerts, cartoons

or game shows – have the capacity to rivet our attention. In so doing we forget about day-to-day problems and worries. The ability to engage with characters in an unreal world for a few hours and to emerge entertained and with a feeling of well-being must be beneficial to the viewer (however strange it sounds!).

Perhaps the importance of entertainment has been undervalued just as the lighter side of life has often been subordinated to work – either in school or on the job market. However, because of its great success in delivering mass entertainment the mass media may be a superior way of delivering messages which are educative to the society. Messages about lifestyle, health and fitness, environmental awareness, appropriate dress and behaviour, as well as consumer education or even issues to do with national consciousness, can all be delivered to a more receptive audience if they are infused with what makes entertainment successful – comedy, memorable characters, drama, setting, props and local cultural content such as music, dance and artefacts.

BOX 15.6 Radio entertainment

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century there has been a great increase in the number of talk shows on radio. While television, especially with the many foreign cable stations, drew a large audience away from radio, radio sought to make a comeback by focusing on local issues and events in a call-in-talk show format. Some radio stations focus only on talk shows. To what extent does the content of these shows contribute to human development?

It is perhaps the case that some people are better informed by listening to or participating in such shows. They tend to vary in quality and some may be more informative than others. For example, there are shows where people call in to complain about their treatment by government departments or public utility companies. Their complaints are aired and taken up by the host, who undertakes to get a response on the matter. This certainly helps citizens to feel that, whether they live in an isolated rural area or even if they are elderly and homebound, there is an agency which can help them resolve their problems. This ensures a sense of equity.

However, many of the shows which seem to be largely about entertainment are of uncertain

value. The host is typically some charismatic personality, or perhaps just forceful, and the show revolves around his or her opinions and reflections. People call in to praise or enrage the host. The dialogue is intemperate, to say the least, and the caller may be castigated and vilified. Frequently such shows are anchored in a certain political perspective – as supporters of a particular political party. It is clear that many of these talk show hosts have little training in journalism; sometimes they are just ‘radio personalities’. We have to ask some questions, too, about the effect of these programmes. To what extent does the entertainment they afford enhance human development? Certainly people get a chance to air their opinions. But what happens after that? Those who agree with the host and his or her position merely entrench their views. Those with an alternative opinion give the others the opportunity to rant and rage. To some extent, then, the mass media seem to be reinforcing bias and stereotypes (the roots of prejudice) as there is no serious analysis of what contributors say.

15.3**Construction of national, regional and diasporic identity****15.3.1 National Identity**

It would be extremely difficult for a country which was in charge of its own destiny – an independent country – to build a sense of national consciousness and loyalty if it did not have the services of the mass media. A major goal of newly independent countries is to organise government-owned, public broadcasting services. (In fact, when there are coup attempts, a priority area for the rebels is always to get control of the mass media.) National ownership of the mass media allows important information to be disseminated to keep the public well informed about the government’s activities and issues of national importance. It also allows local culture and national heroes to be celebrated, thereby building a sense of belonging and a collective destiny. This is especially

important in independent countries with significant numbers of people belonging to different ethnic and racial groups.

In the era following independence Caribbean governments took an active part in owning radio and television stations and in screening the content aired, though technology eventually put an end to much of these efforts at censorship. The coming of cable and direct television and the Internet, made possible by satellite technology, also made it easier to set up local radio and television stations. Today there are more local radio and television stations in most Caribbean countries than ever before. Because of the competition among them, some have reinvented themselves to target a different audience and thus their aims and objectives have changed. For example, local radio and television stations may aim specifically for entertainment, or for serious debate and analysis, or to promote local music and culture, or to address the needs of those ethnic groups which have been underrepresented before (sometimes in a different language). This diversity within the mass media makes it a force for equity and empowerment.

Today we have moved from a position of monopoly media (where the government owned all or a large part of the mass media) to another kind of monopoly – now, big business interests dominate as owners. While this can threaten equity, in that a pro-business slant may predominate, there are also a number of private groups which seek the interests of ordinary citizens. One important example is community radio. Certain areas of a country, perhaps isolated areas, have sought to bind their communities together by organising local radio networks to publish community news, events and debate about the larger society. In Trinidad and Tobago, Tobago

has its own radio station, Radio Tambrin (beaming from 1998), giving greater coverage of Tobago's affairs than the mainstream media. Similarly, Radio Toco serves the information needs of this remote, mountainous, north-eastern corner of Trinidad, which used to receive only a weak radio signal. UNESCO provided funds to establish Radio Toco and other communities' radio initiatives in the Caribbean, such as that in Bluefields, Westmoreland, and Port Antonio in Portland, Jamaica, as part of its thrust to help empower rural residents. The relative ease with which investors can now obtain broadcast licences suggests that the local mass media in each Caribbean

BOX 15.7

Case study: Belize – the mass media and national identity

Belize is a large country by Caribbean standards (23 000 square km, around 9000 square miles). It has a small, scattered and ethnically diverse population (300 000 in 2005). Large numbers of Belizean migrants live in the metropole while many migrants from Guatemala and other Central American countries have moved into Belize, further strengthening a Spanish presence which began with the Mexicans migrating to Belize following the Caste Wars of 1854. An unsettled border dispute with Guatemala means that Belize lives with the ever-present threat of invasion. These factors have contributed to prolonging the process of reaching a fully developed sense of national identity. The mass media can in this context either facilitate nation-building or be a divisive force.

Belize has no daily newspapers but it has several weeklies, and the *Reporter* and the *Amandala* (two independent newspapers) have daily online editions. Only the *Amandala* has experimented with a mid-week (Tuesday) print edition. Both, however, are based in Belize City and have a Creole and urban orientation so that national news coverage is poor. *The Guardian* is the official organ of the United Democratic Party, which won the 2008 election, and *The Belize Times* is the newspaper of the People's United Party (PUP). After that election the PUP began to publish a second newspaper, possibly because of a split in the leadership of the PUP. Recently there has been a proliferation of local television stations, with at least one in each district town and more in the administrative capital, Belmopan, as well as in Belize City, the main commercial centre of the country. There are many radio stations but few are nationwide in coverage, transmitting in English, Spanish and some Creole. Other local radio stations exist in different parts of the country, as well as a number of US evangelical

stations. The major radio stations today offer Internet broadcasts.

The print and electronic media focus on the largest population centres, Belize City and Belmopan. In these areas there is a concentration of jobs, government departments, facilities, educational institutions and entertainment. Governments, political parties and the mass media target the people and businesses found there. Consequently, the other regions of Belize, particularly the south, are poorly served by the mass media. This kind of inequity in the communications network of a country puts rural people, the Maya in particular, at a disadvantage and is a contributing factor to rural underdevelopment. The imbalance in opportunity and information contributes to rural–urban migration as the towns grow and the countryside becomes underpopulated. At present people in the interior do not have up-to-date and accurate information about the workings of government departments, or about their entitlements under health benefits and recent reforms, for example.

Two proposals have been put forward in an attempt to strengthen the communication links within the country and thus to build a feeling of national solidarity, important in developing a national identity. One is community radio and the other is regional newspapers. They both need advertising dollars to survive, however. While government departments pay quite a lot to advertise vacancies, notices and other forms of public information, their advertising tends to centre on the urban areas. However, regional newspapers or radio can well survive if some of this advertising comes their way, and at the same time this will be helping to knit the country together.



Fig. 15.3 Members of opposition political parties to the government of President Michel Martelly giving a press conference on 2 December 2014 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti

country are well poised to meet the information and entertainment needs of their citizens and be instrumental in nation-building (see the case study on Belize in Box 15.7 opposite).

Just as the mass media can be a potentially integrative force for the country of Belize, we can make a similar case for CARICOM and the regional integration movement. The Caribbean stretches from Central to South America and incorporates islands in between which are diverse in geography, history and cultural life. The mass media have a country focus so that Caribbean people do not necessarily know much about what is going on in another Caribbean country. Regional news providers such as the Caribbean News Agency Radio (CANAradio) of the Caribbean Media Corporation were created to maintain a focus on regional news but they have not been able to compete effectively with the foreign news media and now more or less limit themselves to sport, particularly cricket coverage. The Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU), situated in Bridgetown, Barbados, was set up by CARICOM to deepen the integration process. It sought to stimulate the flow of broadcast material for both radio and television across the region and created many syndicated programmes, such as CaribScope and CaribVision. The intention was to use the media as a force for integration (Searwar, 2006).

One of the mandates of the CBU was to assist national news stations to pool their resources and to create programmes of interest to and in the interests of Caribbean people. In 2000 CANAradio and the CBU joined forces because they were both feeling the effects of a lack of funding and severe competition from Internet

news penetration into the region. The integration movement is still hopeful that a radio or television station will emerge which can service the whole Caribbean on a daily basis – this would certainly boost the integration effort by nurturing a feeling of a Caribbean identity.

15.3.2 Regional and Diasporic Identity

Migration is a way of life for Caribbean people and we take it for granted because most of us have family members abroad. But migration involves a deep disturbance in the psychological, emotional and mental states of an individual which has implications for the development of an identity. If you were to go abroad right now, especially to Europe or North America, to live it would not be a smooth and easy process, even though you may be experiencing no economic hardship. Caribbean novelists and authors continue to tease away at themes in migrant communities of alienation, hopelessness, placelessness, longing, not belonging, trying to belong, and so on. It is inevitable in a society where you are in the minority that your perceptions of self will undergo some remaking – sometimes this is deliberate and rehearsed, for others it is something they do unconsciously and automatically.

The process is inevitable because how others perceived you at home in the Caribbean will be very different to how others perceive you in a First World country. You may be only close to your true self when socialising with other Caribbean folk; your interactions at school, at the workplace, in the subway and socialising with non-Caribbeans would be adjusted to portray an image of how you would like to be perceived. At the same time you know that you have to penetrate the preconceptions and prejudice of a largely white population who tend to regard West Indians as loud, violent, happy-go-lucky, full of song and dance and of a lower social class because of the large numbers of Caribbeans who find work as nurses, carers, janitors, bus conductors and nannies.

The ethnic mass media become important to the diasporic community because they provide a powerful means of shaping or reshaping identities. In cities or areas with large West Indian populations, radio stations have emerged catering almost exclusively for this group. By disseminating information on what is happening back home – news and entertainment – and by playing Caribbean songs and music, by hearing the familiar accents, by discussing Caribbean recipes and where one could buy ingredients in a foreign city, by providing information which the migrant needs to know, the foreign-based Caribbean radio station helps to ease the process of adjustment in an alien land. Box 15.8 showcases a recent addition to these broadcast media, JAM TV.

BOX 15.8**JAM TV**

In April 2014 an advertisement appeared in a number of media, including newspapers, online media and Caribbean Media House Ltd's LinkedIn and Facebook pages, for a new TV station aimed specifically at the Caribbean diaspora. Below is an extract from the advertorial in *Young Voices online* (<http://www.voice-online.co.uk/article/caribbean-comes-uk-television>, accessed 24 April 2014).

Every weekend, starting from 5pm until midnight, JamTV will feature a Caribbean news roundup, children's storytelling, school quiz programmes, talent competitions, cooking, religious and comedy shows, and travel guides, showcasing the beauty of the Caribbean as well as the spirit of its people.

Ricardo Allen, CEO at Caribbean Media House, said: 'Black culture here in the UK tends to focus on the harder-edged urban youth market that can be off putting and overlooks the needs of other sections of the community.'

Fellow CEO Lillian Allen added: 'We want to build a channel that caters to the whole family, with programmes that everyone here can relate to, same as they do back home in the Caribbean, where [the kids are] right there with you watching the family channel.'

'The aim is to quickly develop commercial interest in the channel, by providing a unique and distinctive opportunity for local and international companies to advertise products and services to a niche audience frequently overlooked by mainstream television.'

Nevertheless, this is a fractured and conflicting process – while the ethnic mass media help to assuage yearnings and longings, they intensify the levels of difference between the migrant and the host population. Specific media products such as radio soap operas, concerts and jazz festivals, plays and other dramatic productions and the countdown of top Caribbean hits, as well as music videos of Caribbean artistes on certain television stations beamed from the Caribbean all help to underscore difference and promote a distinct ethnic group in metropolitan countries. However, as told by Gentles-Peart (2013), the Caribbean International Network (CIN) in New York purveys mainly Jamaican music and culture – which may serve as a unifying force enjoyed by all Caribbean people who listen in; but, on the other hand, it may not be so empowering to those of other Caribbean nationalities who are also seeking ways to identify in the diasporic space.

The ethnic mass media located in the diasporic community play a role in preventing or delaying the full acculturation of the Caribbean migrant into First World culture and values. In so doing they make the transition less difficult. By seamlessly integrating news from home with news from the diasporic context the media succeed in orienting the migrant not to a polarised view of 'being home' or 'being home abroad' but to a fluid multicultural state of being which is truer to how the migrant feels. Identity in the diasporic community, then, is constantly being negotiated and hybridised between present experiences and remembered or imagined experiences of the past. However, this is largely true for first and second generations of Caribbean people abroad. Their children and subsequent generations are more fully integrated into white mainstream culture, but they too continue to bear their Caribbean heritage and identity in complex, negotiated ways (see Box 15.9).

ACTIVITY 15.5

Read Box 15.8 and answer the questions.

1. Identify the audience at which JAM TV is aimed.
2. What does the advertorial mean by 'showcasing the beauty of the Caribbean as well as the spirit of its people'? How do you think this aim can be achieved?
3. What aspects of diasporic culture are the broadcasts concerned with?
4. Assess the commercial potential of the channel.
5. What evidence is there that the diaspora thinks of the Caribbean in 'imagined ways'?

BOX 15.9**Case study: Caribbean Media Partners**

Some Caribbean countries are covered by the media organisation Caribbean Media Partners, a subsidiary of the UK's Latin American Bureau, whose mission is expressly to use the dissemination of news and information to facilitate regional integration. Of the eight Caribbean countries that the organisation covers, only one, Trinidad and Tobago, is a Commonwealth Caribbean country. However, the idea certainly has potential for the rest of the Anglophone Caribbean. Since it is based in the UK it is also relevant to the diaspora in that country.

15.4

Cultural experience and exchange

15.4.1 Cultural Expression

The mass media provide a place where the talents of musicians, singers, actors, novelists, artists and storytellers or commentators can be showcased. The forum or platform that the mass media provides for entertainers makes it possible for the entertainment industry to grow and for individual artistes to gain fame and increased income. We can say that without the mass media it would be very difficult for performers to become known. Thus, the mass media are important in promoting artistes.

Through copyright agreements some musicians, short story writers, video producers, artists, photographers and songwriters are able to earn royalties. The boost that entertainers get from being showcased on the mass media helps to develop cultural industries – music recordings, local television serials, dramatic presentations – which are widely disseminated not only in the region but also among the Caribbean diaspora as well.

Research mini-project

Generally speaking, the mass media provide a forum for cultural expression. Analyse the cultural content which is being showcased on the mass media (you may choose to focus on only one form of media) in your home territory by devising categories and estimating how much programming on a daily (or weekly) basis falls into each category.

- 1 What conclusions can you draw about the types of programmes which are emphasised?
- 2 What types of local cultural expression are emphasised?

15.4.2 Cultural Imperialism

Whereas in colonial times the media as well as governments tended to fuel European **cultural imperialism**, today Caribbean countries are overrun by

Cultural imperialism refers to the enculturation of one society by another.

the US mass media, especially by cable television programming. The images, lifestyles, fashions, stories, stereotypes and news disseminated and portrayed by the US media have become part and parcel of the knowledge

and daily experiences of Caribbean people. The *cultural imperialism thesis* says that the foreign mass media export cultural products to the countries of the developing world, where they are gladly embraced, leading to the adoption of foreign norms, values and ways of life. It is a simple theory which says that if we are bombarded with images from the US all the time we will eventually become conditioned to those images and begin to regard them as normal. In so doing we are quite likely to give up on some aspects of our Caribbean culture.

There is a lot of debate about whether this happens in the way described above. Certainly there is much evidence that young people, especially, buy into the idea of US designer wear and music, and see the US as a desirable destination. But to what extent was this caused by the mass media? Migration is still a strong cultural norm and almost all families have relatives living in the US, so that there is a long history of Caribbean people regarding the US in a favourable light. The liking for US music and films is not limited to youth but permeates the whole of society. In addition, the dependence we now have on the computer and computer software makes technology a way of life, and the US is the leader in computer technologies. So, while US images and lifestyles are everywhere evident on the mass media in the Caribbean today, our history, traditions and developments as an information society predispose us to be receptive to those messages.

The increase in the number of cable television stations and increasing access to the Internet in recent years have certainly intensified the impact of foreign cultural images and lifestyles on Caribbean people. The information and entertainment packaged by the foreign mass media, according to the cultural imperialism thesis, tends to shape what we know (and what we don't know), as well as promote the concerns of the US as our own. For example, the search for Bin Laden (and his eventual death), the threat of terrorism and the stereotypes painted of Arab and Muslim people become normal to us because of our constant exposure to US television. After a while we do not even question why Arab people are almost always portrayed in a negative light, why we are not treated to their side of the story and their triumphs. We come to accept that we are on the US side (without much conscious thought) and seemingly do so out of our own free will. The cultural imperialism thesis, then, says that the constant exposure to US culture and perspectives brings about these pro-US sentiments.

In the twenty-first century the US mass media are thus seen as a force which intensifies the cultural imperialism process in the Caribbean. It is not only the

pervasive presence of US images and representations of US lifestyles which contribute to this, but also the actual structure of the US mass media. For instance:

- The large US media conglomerates (ABC, CNN, NBC and Fox News) are able to produce the news or television features more cheaply and effectively than small media houses in the Caribbean, so they dominate Caribbean media.
- This structure of the mass media means that there is an overabundance of US views, news and perspectives. This raises the question of whether we have a 'free press', as the majority of our news is produced by the US.
- The idea of a free press becomes more doubtful when we consider that among the US conglomerates there is a concentration of media power, with one conglomerate owning a fleet of television stations, newspapers and movie production studios.
- The competition among these media houses reverberates in the Caribbean in the form of programming. They vie with each other to provide exciting, spectacular, sensational news coverage and highly rated shows. What we receive and think is real may be distortions and stories slanted in particular ways.

ACTIVITY 15.6

There is a view that, even in the midst of what looks like cultural imperialism, Caribbean cultural life remains as vibrant as ever. This suggests that what makes a person 'Caribbean' is hardly likely to change just because of the wealth of US images around. Examine the statements above and then answer the following questions.

1. What makes you a 'Caribbean' person?
2. What aspects of this 'Caribbeanness' are likely to change because of the foreign mass media?

In these ways Caribbean life has become saturated with images and messages from abroad. We live in a media-saturated environment. The cultural imperialism thesis is saying that, given this set of circumstances, US culture is becoming dominant in the Caribbean. Those who oppose this view say that while a Caribbean person may wear US designer labels, listen to hip hop, watch MTV and be an avid filmgoer, that does not make him or her less Caribbean.

The threat of cultural imperialism largely stemming from mass media imperialism should be forcing a reaction from Caribbean governments and mass media

organisations which is not evident as yet. A major need is clearly for an educational initiative to demystify the barrage of US cultural images via media literacy in our school curricula. Either through direct or systematic analysis of American news and other programming, or through watchdog sites which report inaccuracies, oversimplifications and prejudicial views, both in schools and in the broadcast media, some effort must be made to help citizens understand their media-saturated environment. A second major need is for regional consultation on the role of the media in Caribbean society, leading to a policy paper which envisions a programme for the development of the media. This programme should have national and regional development as goals which are as important as economic viability. Hence, programming would encompass the building of equity, productivity and empowerment in sustainable ways among Caribbean people.

15.5

The promotion and defence of the rights of citizens

The media can have an important role in standing up for the rights and freedoms of citizens in a democratic society. There is a wide range of these, many of them depending on the freedom of the press itself:

- defending democratic freedoms such as the right to peaceful political protest, the right of workers to take industrial action where necessary, freedom of religious belief and worship and freedom of thought and expression;
- acting as a watchdog for any government moves towards dictatorship, especially the removal of important freedoms or postponement or cancellation of elections;
- informing citizens of their legislative rights, or the erosion of them, for example consumer rights (e.g. fair trading on the part of businesses) or social rights (e.g. legislation on gender issues or domestic violence);
- bringing to the awareness of the public the plight which an individual or group may be experiencing and keeping that issue alive, even if it goes against the interests of powerful groups in the society.

The media are cast in the role of promoting social justice and they must therefore expose any infringement of citizens' rights (see Box 15.10 for an example).

BOX 15.10

**Case Study:
Indigenous rights
in Belize**

One example of media intervention in the realm of indigenous rights took place recently and was played out in the Belizean courts. In 2013 a US firm began to construct an access road across Sarstoon-Temash National Park, which comprises communal lands owned by the Mayas. The company was exploring for oil and had a legal permit from the Belizean Government. A Maya group and their supporters, the Sarstoon-Temash Institute for Indigenous Management (SATIIM), filed a suit against the Attorney General and the US company claiming that constructing the road and oil exploration was unlawful in a protected area.

The judgment of the court in 2014 went in favour of the Mayas and it was stated that the government had to get prior consent from the Maya people before there could be any commercial use of their lands. While the press was instrumental in making this case known across the nation, the conflict between indigenous peoples wishing to preserve their ancestral lands and the profit-seeking interests of big companies is a continuing national problem. The press has an important role to play, not only to defend the rights of citizens, but also to publish articles and opinions discussing the right of the Mayas to respect, and advising that national policy should seek first to negotiate with organisations like SATIIM. In other words, the press is not only concerned about defending rights but should seek to play a role in resolution of an issue. By keeping the dialogue alive, and by highlighting the perspectives of different groups, the press can promote and defend the rights of citizens but it can also be a part of the solution.

Source: <http://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/campaign-update-belize-major-court-ruling-favor-satiim>, accessed 8 April 2014.

Research mini-project

Examine a number of types of media (including Internet-based ones) for information on consumer rights. What other types of information dissemination are available for this, and how effective do you think they are in educating consumers on their legislative rights?

**Wrap Up**

The mass media have great potential to play a leading role in the development process in the Caribbean because almost everybody is tuned in and turned on. Caribbean governments, institutions and other groups should understand how closely people are attuned to the mass media and actively seek to harness them for change and transformation. The mass media today are largely being used for entertainment but the ingredients which go towards packaging successful entertainment should be incorporated into the airing of more serious national issues, such as health and well-being, civic education, political awareness and even media literacy. The potential of the local mass media for development, though, is obstructed by the dominance of the US mass media, which many see as agents of cultural imperialism.

Research TOPICS

A possible research inquiry could be built around analysing the type of messages found in a particular form of the mass media to determine its influences on development. One specific concern could be cultural imperialism. You might choose, for example, several cable television channels and list the types of programmes they air at the peak hours of viewing. You will also have to examine the content which is being aired in relation to your research questions about development. Steps that you might follow include the following:

- Formulate a brief questionnaire which you may hand out to your classmates, family and neighbours. Ask about favourite cable stations, favourite programmes and what times tend to be their peak viewing times. You may also ask about why these were their favourite programmes.
- Using the information, decide which were the most popular programmes and select those for the study.
- You undertake to watch these programmes over a period of time (you may switch between those which are on at the same time). To be able to record and assess what you are viewing, you need some sort of checklist or rating scale for each programme (see Table 15.1).
- For example, you could rate each programme according to criteria you devise which are important in

development. In other words, what do you think television programming should provide in terms of information, values, enjoyment, etc. which contribute in some positive way to the development of the society.

Table 15.1 is just one suggestion of how you might rate programmes. You can present your data in the form of a table where you combine all your information. Remember the numbers are just rankings and cannot be treated as if they had a value, so you cannot add them together, for instance, or create pie charts, as that would demand numerical values. So one way of presenting the data you produce by watching these programmes and rating them is to tabulate them, as in Table 15.2.

Table 15.2 summarises the data (i.e. 'having watched programme X over a week, or the movie slot at a certain time in that week, this is how I assessed each programme on each of the criteria'). These data then have to be interpreted to see if these programmes are on the whole contributing to the development of the viewers. You should be cautioned that this study relies on individual perceptions and tastes to a great extent and that is why you asked respondents of the questionnaire to state why these were their favourite programmes. You will have their views to consider as you interpret the findings.

Table 15.1 A possible rating scale for evaluating television programmes

CABLE NETWORK:		SHOW:			
TIME: 8–9 PM					
CRITERIA		POOR (1)	MEDIOCRE (2)	GOOD (3)	EXCELLENT (4)
1	Moral: emphasis on good, fair, just (positive values, e.g. law and order)				
2	Entertainment: absorbing, relaxing, providing balance, reflection				
3	Equity: stories which uphold the equal value of human beings				
4	Empowerment: ideas, stories which highlight 'overcoming', self-efficacy				
5	Critical: programmes which encourage a critical stance to mainstream ideas				

Table 15.2 Summarising data on television programmes (an example)

PROGRAMMES	MORAL	ENTERTAINMENT	EQUITY	EMPOWERMENT	CRITICAL
The Bold and the Beautiful	2	4	1	2	1
NBC News	3	3	4	4	3
Hardball					
Movie					

Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Define (i) the mass media; (ii) blogging. (2 marks)
(b) State TWO ways in which blogging is transforming the mass media. (4 marks)
- 2 (a) Explain what is meant by the term 'human development'. (2 marks)
(b) Outline TWO contributions made by the mass media to human development in the Caribbean. (4 marks)
- 3 (a) Distinguish between libel and slander. (2 marks)
(b) State TWO criteria for a free press which are met by media in the Commonwealth Caribbean. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) Name TWO Caribbean media houses. (2 marks)
(b) Outline TWO ways in which the media can be used to construct regional identity in the Caribbean. (4 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Examine how the mass media's role to provide information can lead to the development of the society.
- 2 Describe how you and other Caribbean people may be influenced by the foreign mass media.
- 3 Explain how the mass media can be used to help develop a sense of national identity in Caribbean countries.

Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 Explain, with examples, what becoming a 'wise consumer' of mass media means.
- 2 To what extent do Caribbean countries enjoy freedom of the press? Discuss this issue using examples from at least TWO Caribbean countries.
- 3 Discuss how the mass media can be used for the purposes of cultural imperialism. How much of this imperialism do you consider is deliberate?

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16 Social Justice



General Strike Protest in Le Moule, Guadeloupe, French West Indies in February 2009, where islanders demanded lower prices and higher wages.

Today in the Caribbean social justice is a major concern and is seen as a necessary part of the development process. The traditional ideas about development – that it is mainly concerned with economic growth – have been gradually giving way to more humanistic conceptions. However, there are different interpretations about how a society should establish fair treatment for its citizens. In this chapter we examine several conceptions of social justice – that fairness is a natural right, that society has a duty to ensure equitable levels of human welfare and that socially just practices operate to the mutual advantage of groups. We also examine prejudice and discrimination based on age (ageism), gender (sexism) and ethnicity, and, in particular, religion (creedism), race (racism) and social class (classism). In all these cases it will be shown that a breach of social justice has a negative impact on development.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. explain the relationship between social justice, human rights, equity, equality and discrimination;
2. analyse contrasting conceptions of social justice such as natural rights, welfare and mutual advantage;
3. examine cases of social injustice on the grounds of age, gender and ethnicity (race, class and religion);
4. explain how breaches of social justice impact on development in the Caribbean.

16.1

Conceptions of social justice

Listed below are several statements about **social justice**.

Social justice refers to the ideal that all groups in the society should be treated fairly. Any breaches of social justice are acts of discrimination.

Social justice is about:

- A. preventing human rights abuses;
- B. obtaining equality for different groups;
- C. overcoming the barriers which prevent some people from enjoying a better quality of life;
- D. maximising everybody's welfare;
- E. ensuring that different groups in the society meet their obligations and responsibilities so that the whole society benefits.

The ideas which seem to imbue these notions of social justice are:

- **Fairness.** This is conceived of as equal treatment for all social groups. For example, groups which have been marginalised could be brought into the mainstream by having more political power, as indigenous groups have been in Guyana through representation at the various levels of district administration. Statements A, B, C, D and E above are all based on a notion of fairness or equity as equal treatment among groups. Although only B states it explicitly, there is the understanding that groups must be treated fairly because all persons are equal, and as such they have rights which must be recognised.
- **Welfare.** Some groups may need special measures to take advantage of the opportunities which are provided under fair treatment. For example, to fully participate in the political process indigenous groups may need

better access to secondary and tertiary education (e.g. scholarships) and economic opportunities which raise them out of poverty. Statements C and D refer to this when they mention previously marginalised or obstructed groups overcoming barriers and needing assistance in 'maximising everybody's welfare' (welfare refers to standards of living). Statement E also refers to it in that there is the expectation that the welfare of all will be increased, if the society extends help to those who need it most.

- **Responsibilities.** To live in society, to contribute to and benefit from it, is the essence of social justice. This refers to an idea of social justice where all groups should be acting out of a sense of reciprocal transactions with the country and other groups. For example, suppose the indigenous peoples were given 'handouts' over a long period of time without making any significant contribution to the country; that would be an unjust situation. They would not merit such continued assistance. Only Statement E states explicitly that citizens are engaged in a situation of mutual responsibilities for the rights they enjoy.
- **Rights.** Running through the statements is the idea that people have some basic rights which all share, and to deny one group the ability to exercise those rights is a human rights violation. However, Statement E states that social justice has to be based on merit (not only on a right to something), that the group in question is seen to be fulfilling its obligations and responsibilities.

ACTIVITY 16.1

1. Using the discussion here, compose your own short definition of social justice.
2. Explain the relationship between social justice and the humanisation of development.

Social justice, then, hinges on several ideas most of us share – that everybody is equal and although we are organised in different social groups (based on gender, religion, age, social class, and so on) we should all be treated fairly. Ideas of equality (same treatment) and equity (fair treatment) between persons mean essentially that each person has rights – for example, the right to life, to self-expression and to freedom of worship. These human (or natural) rights are what we use to judge whether a person or group is being denied social justice.

A study of social justice highlights the different conceptions people have about why there should be fairness or equity between the different groups in society. The ideas expressed in the statements in the section above represent three different conceptions of social justice, which we will now examine in greater detail.

16.1.1 Natural Rights

‘All human beings are equal and therefore all human beings are entitled to the basic human rights enjoyed by others.’ The basis for making this claim often rests on a supernatural authority, as in ‘God-given rights’. Another basis for making the claim about natural rights lies in an appeal to the moral positions held by most groups, which appear to value human life, liberty and the dignity of people. Thus, human rights or natural rights occur as divinely ordained sanctions and/or as moral beliefs and norms.

However, these are not the only rights to which people are entitled, according to the *UN Declaration of Human Rights*. This document goes much further than ‘natural’ or ‘human’ rights to ‘entitlements’ which people should have in order to live in a just society. They have more to do with social living than basic human rights, and it seems to have become the responsibility of governments and international organisations to ensure that they are enforced. These ‘rights’ are really high-priority areas which seem to be necessary for all people to enjoy similar benefits. For example, the following are included in the UN Declaration of Human Rights for all member states to follow:

- **Civil and political rights.** The right to freedom of expression, to assemble and form associations, to participate in the political process and to run for public office.
- **Economic and social rights.** The right to education and health care, to fair wages, to trade union membership to safe conditions at the workplace and to an adequate standard of living (these are sometimes referred to as ‘welfare rights’).

- **Ethnic rights.** The rights of minorities, and any religious, linguistic, political or cultural group, to the same treatment as other groups in the society. Such rights protect ethnic groups from murder, torture and genocide, as well as from unfair practices in employment and access to education.

To uphold all of these rights/entitlements inevitably brings conflict and tensions, as it may seem that some people are entitled to more than others. Box 16.1 discusses the argument that by giving the indigenous peoples – for example, the Maya of Belize – their historic claim to vast tracts of land (which is their right), a situation results where other ethnic groups claim unfair treatment.

BOX 16.1

Being right versus being fair

In the section on ‘indigenous perspectives’ (§14.6) we discussed the historic claims of the Maya to large areas of Belize and the fact that they had only been granted a fraction of this claim. To the indigenous groups this is unfair and against their natural rights as indigenous peoples. Various human rights organisations have taken up the struggle in international courts seeking social justice for the Maya. Box 15.9 explained the role of the mass media in this campaign.

To the other ethnic groups in Belize these claims are unfair. Granting the full claim of the Maya would greatly reduce the economic landscape of Belize, on which all citizens depend. The Maya would have this land for their exclusive use. Afro-Creoles in Belize, in particular, point to other dangers inherent in such action. They refer to national development in a multi-ethnic society where it is important that one group is not seen to be reaping more rewards than others, becoming ‘a state within a state’. Recognising the indigenous rights of the Maya in this regard would be unfair to other Belizean citizens. In any case, there is a body of opinion in Belize saying that some Mayan groups in Belize are not indigenous to Belize, having come into the area in the early nineteenth century from neighbouring countries.

16.1.2 Conventions, Declarations and Agreements

To a large extent these expanded natural or human rights are enshrined, in a general way, in the constitutions of most Caribbean countries. Caribbean governments are also committed in that they have signed international agreements to protect rights in law. These agreements include:

- the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (adopted 1979);
- the Convention on the Rights of the Child (adopted 1989);
- the Rome Statute (1998), which establishes membership in the International Criminal Court;
- the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (adopted 2006).

Only some of these international agreements, though, have moved into law in individual Caribbean countries. For example, laws to protect women in the home and the workplace, and a family court to judge disputes, are now more evident in the legal systems of Caribbean countries than, say, laws dealing with the basic human right to safe drinking water or the right of citizens to a safe and secure environment. This is largely because Caribbean governments often do not have the resources to provide clean water to all groups and communities in the different regions, or to monitor and evaluate the potential for environmental hazards and disasters. Those who live in areas with an irregular water supply or one of uncertain quality, as well as those who live in areas prone to flood, therefore experience social injustice through the inability of a country to fully address certain conditions of social life, leading to disadvantage and marginalisation.

When social justice issues are regarded as human rights, it presupposes that all persons should be treated equally. To uphold these rights, though, depends on the legal system or international sanctions fostered by monitoring bodies such as Amnesty International. As we saw above, there are many areas of social injustice where a country may have signed an international convention which agreed to secure the rights of indigenous persons, or people with disabilities, or minority communities, and so on, but laws to concretise the agreement have not yet been made. Social justice as a human or natural right, then, is largely left up to the legal system and international bodies to oversee and enforce.

Nothing much is said about individual citizens and their obligation to ensure that the human rights of others are observed. Values such as respect for persons, tolerance and affirming the worth of everyone are largely left up to the socialisation processes taught in the home, school and

religious institutions. Whether or not these values are in fact taught and whether they are internalised remain important questions in building a society where human rights are preserved. From the point of view, then, of social justice as human rights, we see that it is an ideal to which we subscribe in an abstract way because it will improve the quality of life for all. However, it becomes difficult to guarantee if there are no laws to protect certain categories of persons and if in the society itself there are not well thought-out ways of dealing with the problem of human difference at the individual level.

 **Find out what declarations and conventions concerning human rights your country has signed. Which of these have become formalised as a body of laws?**

16.1.3 Welfare

Conceptions of social justice based on ideas about welfare deliberately focus on the distribution of resources in a society which leads to well-being and satisfaction. This idea of social justice sees the need for marginalised and disadvantaged groups to experience more of the material rewards of the society and for the gap between them and the well-to-do to be closed. This more often than not relates to social and economic conditions: for example, wages, equality of job opportunity, conditions of work, training for those without credentials, a more humane education system, housing, social security and unemployment relief.

Obviously, this means not treating people equally but treating unequals unequally. The poorer groups are given more subsidies and opportunities to upgrade their standard of living. Welfare is a notion of 'being fair' which does not emphasise equality or sameness. However, the question of what is 'fair' is continually asked. For example, do Caribbean governments have the necessary resources to supply the poor with free health care, an unemployment relief programme, discounted food items, transport costs and clothing? Even if it is accepted that a government would not be able to supply all of these social security measures, the issue remains about whether it is fair to tax other groups more heavily to pay for subsidies and whether the funds could have been expended in developmental efforts such as job creation to help the poor and others as well.

Welfare is an example of **distributive justice**. While it

Distributive justice requires that the material wealth of a society should be shared around.

might be based on the right of human beings to social justice, it tends to focus on the needs of specific groups. It acts out of an understanding that there is a *social contract* outlining the relationship between a state and its people. Citizens give up certain dimensions of their power (their ability to be violent, to 'take the law into their own hands') in order that most of their needs be met by a government, which they themselves elect. Members of government accept this power and in turn are mindful of their responsibilities to citizens, to provide the conditions for an equitable standard of living.

Welfare, then, is a form of social justice based on the inherent right of persons to equal treatment. More specifically it is based on the needs of certain groups, which mandate that they be helped in order to reduce the inequities in the society. Critics of the welfare model, however, say that it is very expensive and leads to *welfare dependency*, and to varying degrees it is unfair to other groups which have to be taxed to support these measures. Welfare dependency has occurred in a number of developed countries with generous welfare systems, and can lead to the poor becoming so dependent on welfare handouts that they are unable to break out of this dependency and achieve self-reliance.

Those who criticise welfare policies as 'handouts' which are too burdensome on taxpayers tend to see only a narrow picture. Improving a family's economic circumstance goes a long way towards improving the nutrition and health of that family. Access to education for the entire school-age population also goes a long way to reducing the levels of ignorance in the society, of increasing the numbers of those who understand the political process and democracy and those who can make informed choices about their future. Poverty and lack of education left unchecked conspire to keep persons out of the political process, increase the likelihood of unemployment, and thus create a marginalised group in the society.

ACTIVITY 16.2

Investigate the concept known as 'affirmative action'.

1. Are there any examples of affirmative action in your country?
2. Explain how affirmative action is related to the discussion above on welfare.

16.1.4 Mutual Advantage

This view of what is socially just is also based on the idea of the social contract between the state and its citizens. However, it does not approve of welfare provisions for the poor unless the poor are prepared to reciprocate by

taking advantage of welfare and growing out of poverty – which would be mutually beneficial to the state and its citizens. This is a view of social justice which is based on merit, rather than need or rights. What is 'fair' in this view is the mutual arrangements between state and citizens which reinforce the strengths of each party. Thus, an unemployed person on welfare should commit to finding a job by undertaking training or accepting temporary employment – in other words, actively showing that being unemployed is not where she or he wants to be. This is another example of distributive justice, but this time it means that only those who deserve it should receive the rewards of the society – their 'just deserts'.

This conception of social justice, then, criticises the welfare model. The mutual advantage model is saying that welfare can lead to dependency and in so doing is not 'fair' to anyone. In the welfare model the state would be committed to expending enormous funds as 'handouts' and those citizens on welfare would enjoy a life where they did not have to work or contribute to the society. However, critics of this model say that it is highly generalised and speaks of groups as if they had the same power, the same circumstances and the same levels of equality. It lumps all people on welfare together as if they were one uniform group.

Much of the language of those who advocate for mutual advantage stresses self-reliance as a cardinal virtue which must be nurtured in a fair and just state. By stating that a system of mutual obligation where welfare is concerned should go a long way towards nurturing self-reliance, these advocates are in fact being unfair to poor people. The latter may well be inclined towards developing self-reliance, but family circumstances, low levels of education and few employable skills constrain their choices and even their awareness about what training courses or career paths exist and what is a good option to take. In addition, their self-confidence about looking for work and doing well in interviews may not be on a par with those of citizens who are affluent, skilled and knowledgeable. Thus, to say that they have to be self-reliant rather than dependent, and that if they do not show this quality their allowances would be removed, is unfair. It assumes that indigenous peoples, poor rural and urban folk and disabled people all have a similar set of values and circumstances so that blanket judgements can be made.

The mutual advantage model of social justice accepts that all citizens are inherently equal and those who are not experiencing an equitable level of socioeconomic well-being should be helped to do so. In return, however, they should resolve to grasp the opportunities provided and move off the need for welfare. Since those of the poorer

socioeconomic groups are less likely to want to invest in long-term training for rewards several years hence, they are not likely to be helped by this model. This way of thinking about social justice values the goals and norms of mainstream society, such as a capitalist system of social and economic relations.

ACTIVITY 16.3

1. Briefly distinguish between the concepts of social justice based on (a) natural or human rights, (b) welfare and (c) mutual advantage.
2. Which of these models do you think is most likely to construct a fair society?



SUMMARY

While issues of social justice are very topical in the society today, different ways of understanding social justice tend to emphasise human rights, human needs or merit. Each view of social justice advocates different strategies for minimising inequities in the society. The most serious disagreement, however, is between those who see welfare as the major avenue for establishing fairness in the society and those who criticise welfare without controls, saying that it is the reciprocal relations between groups which ensure fairness.

16.2

Discrimination and prejudice

Caribbean societies have evolved out of a set of historical circumstances – conquest, slavery, colonialism and the plantation system – which have entrenched social injustice and left a legacy of social stratification and unfair practices based on class, religion, race and colour prejudices. These are not our only forms of social injustice. Women, minority groups such as indigenous peoples and disabled and older persons all suffer from some form of inequity as well.

When a group does not experience fairness or equity, a state of disadvantage or *marginalisation* is taking place. Those who study inequalities focus on the existence of prejudice, discrimination and stereotypes in the society. The terms ‘prejudice’ and ‘stereotypes’ refer to attitudes we have, while ‘discrimination’ refers to acts or behaviours which are unfair in some way. As we see below, prejudice

may or may not result in discrimination and vice versa – they can occur independently of each other.

16.2.1 Prejudices and Stereotypes

A prejudice is an attitude based on the belief that another social group is inferior (or superior) in some way. The belief is based on a prejudgement about others, a tendency to think of others and decide about them in advance of experiencing the situation, usually without much knowledge of the people or the specific situation. For example, if someone harbours racial prejudices against a whole group of people and a conflict situation occurs between some members of this group and another, then that person is likely to believe everything bad about the group which is subject to the prejudice.

Prejudgements may be both positive and negative. For example, there is a tendency to think of the rich and famous as also being intelligent. This belief or prejudgement encourages an attitude towards the rich which is largely positive and optimistic, when there is no basis for such thinking in the first place. Usually, however, the problems in society arise from prejudices which are based on negative or pejorative stereotypes.

A *stereotype* is a fairly rigid set of ideas about a group of people which typifies them as belonging to certain categories or having certain well-defined traits: for example, that black people have no head for business, that Indians hoard money and that the Chinese are inveterate gamblers. Prejudices and stereotypes intertwine and support each other. Usually the build-up of a prejudice is due to some stereotyping along the way.

A prejudice or prejudgement may develop as a result of our socialisation through the agencies of the family, the peer group, the church, the school and the mass media. Usually it is ‘caught’ rather than explicitly taught, as when we internalise and take as ‘true’ the dominant emotions, feelings, judgements and orientations which our friends and family have about certain groups. For example, when we are growing up we hear from family members or members of our church that Roman Catholics worship Mary rather than Jesus Christ, that pastors live an affluent life off tithes, or that in some religions idols are worshipped and strange practices occur, such as when the Spiritual Baptists go on the ‘mourning grounds’. In such cases, and others having to do with race, for example, our attitudes to groups are born out of ideas about others which are based on flimsy evidence, hearsay and the cues we get from our family and friends about them. These are the stereotypes we borrow from other people and upon which we build prejudiced ways of thinking about others.

The roots of prejudice

Prejudices and stereotypes are examples of things which we have learned from others, usually our family and friends and also from the mass media. These ‘learnings’ tend to be very stable and resistant to change. Even when we encounter evidence to the contrary, we tend to prefer our original perspectives. For example, we might meet a house-husband who is content with his life; after thinking about it for a while we might well conclude that he is odd and the majority of men would not tolerate a life which was only deemed suitable for women. This is a prejudiced way of thinking – we have no way of knowing all these persons and their feelings on the issue.

One reason put forward to explain the strength with which we hold prejudices and stereotypes is the way in which we learn. If you reflect on the curriculum in school, for example, you will notice that there is hardly any in-depth study of highly controversial issues necessitating an interrogation of different views and arbitrating between them to come up with a fair assessment. In school, what is taught is largely textbook knowledge which has been simplified, clarified and reduced in such a way that it can be learned quickly. As a result, students have very little experience in pondering social life and learning skills to negotiate complexity.

The learned behaviour of simplifying and sanitising topics does not stand students in good stead when they have to observe, listen to and participate in scenarios where prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination arise. As a result, students tend to depend on the way in which they have learned – for example, the branding of an entire group of people with certain labels and ostracism or suspicion of those who are different, just because they are different – as a result of a failure to address complexity in their education.

It is not easy to take fully on board the task of wondering why someone is different, and what changes that difference might necessitate in one’s own world view. People thus shy away from this kind of critical thinking, and to a large extent this is responsible for the stability of most prejudices and stereotypes.

The ‘Other’

Sociologists and psychologists have studied the nature of prejudice and focus on how our socialisation leads us to construct our own way of life, our groups and our people as ‘normal’ and acceptable, while those of another religion, race, ethnicity, income bracket and even another nationality are regarded as the ‘Other’. We see this in the Caribbean in how citizens of one country regard another Caribbean territory. We make some very scathing judgements about our CARICOM

neighbours, the outcome of which is that we feel superior to them. We see prejudice too when we speak of other people as ‘having an accent’ (meaning that they speak with a slightly different inflection from us), when in truth everybody has an ‘accent’. And when we have a disagreement with another (even a person belonging to our circle of friends and family), it is invariably the case that we were wronged and that it is the other person’s fault. In all these cases there is a central tendency to value ourselves and anything to do with ourselves (the ‘I’) as superior to the ‘Other’.

Thus, to explain prejudice and the development of stereotypes, there seems to be a common urge to judge others in terms of our own reference points, lifestyle, beliefs and values. To judge others using solely our own standards and values is to have an *ethnocentric* point of view. If this is a characteristic trait of the different groups in society, then the incidence of prejudice and stereotyped thinking is likely to remain high unless measures are taken to address our ways of thinking about the ‘Other’.

 **The point is sometimes made that ‘stereotypes actually help us to negotiate life.’ Explain what you understand by this statement.**

16.2.2 Discrimination

‘Discrimination’ refers to acts or behaviours which treat others unfairly. Such acts may arise from a prejudice or a negative attitude towards others. Consider these examples:

- If an employer believes that young black men are lazy and prone to engage in violence (in other words, a stereotype), that employer may not hire them and may prefer someone from another age, race or gender group. This would be an act of discrimination as it is an unfair practice based on a belief which cannot be justified in relation to the applicants.
- On the other hand, the same employer may hold such prejudices yet hire members of the group anyway because he or she thinks it politically prudent to do so.
- The employer may have no prejudices towards the group yet feel that the clientele he or she serves would prefer to deal with others, in which case it is better not to hire young black men. This is a case of discrimination but without holding a prejudice.

The institutions of society may discriminate even though the members of that society may not hold any prejudice. For example, in some countries, while women can be part of the armed forces, they are not allowed

to face actual combat. This arises from prejudices about women that prejudice them as the 'gentler sex' and as 'reproducers' of the human race and in need of 'protection'. In the armed forces these attitudes are institutionalised, which makes them difficult to change, even where the wider society has lost these prejudices. For a woman desirous of serving her country, in a job for which she has been trained, these restrictions amount to discrimination.

Acts of discrimination increase levels of inequity in the society. Ethnic discrimination is very prevalent in Caribbean societies; for example, where employment is concerned, skin colour is still associated with qualities having to do with such seemingly unrelated character traits as diligence, courtesy and intelligence. White or near-white groups tend to be awarded jobs, contracts and prestigious positions based on a belief that their skin colour confers on them superior traits. This is an aspect of racism and constitutes an act of discrimination. Acts of discrimination against older persons (ageism), women (sexism), the disabled (ableism), religions (creedism), socioeconomic class (classism) and other attributes (for example, rural residents) also exacerbate social injustice in a society. These acts are based on attitudes of prejudice and stereotyping which result largely from how we privilege the 'I' in relation to the 'Other'. Social injustice heightens conflict in the society and severely impacts upon development. In the following sections certain prejudices and related discriminatory acts are examined in the context of Caribbean society and its developmental goals.

SUMMARY

The inequalities and inequities faced by certain groups in society usually stem from other more powerful groups deliberately putting them at a disadvantage because of their differences. The problem of human difference is one that bedevils humankind, as can be seen today on the world stage – a lack of understanding of others, a refusal to empathise with others and a continuing belief that one's own perspective is the right one. This solid belief that what one thinks and what one's group believes are the correct ways to understand something lead to the development of prejudices and stereotypes about others, which for the most part result in discriminatory acts against them. Social injustice, then, is an outcome of setting up obstacles for less powerful groups because they are different in some way from the dominant groups in the society.

16.3

Ageism

'Ageism' is an attitude towards mainly older people which treats them as objects of not much worth. It is therefore a prejudice and is built up through a number of stereotypes we have acquired about older people through our socialisation and our habit of always locating ourselves as separate from the 'Other'. Logically we should not be having prejudicial attitudes or engaging in discriminatory acts towards older persons because ageing is an automatic process and all of us, if we survive, will reach old age one day. So, logically, why do we think negative things about older persons when, sooner or later, we will be old ourselves? Perhaps it is because we think that we will be different, that we will age differently? If this is so, then we are judging a whole group of people based on the idea that we will not be like that when we age – judging others according to the 'I'. It may well be, though, that to younger people the thought of being old is just embarrassing and they associate it with negative stereotypes. Whatever the reason, there are a number of stereotypes associated with growing older which we need to interrogate.

ACTIVITY 16.4

The list below summarises four stereotypes which are commonly felt about older people.

- 'Older people are usually sick, frail or infirm.'
- 'Older people's mental faculties decline with age.'
- 'Because of physical and mental deterioration, older people cannot support themselves and are dependent on others.'
- 'Older people suffer from depression.'

List about ten persons you know who are considered to be 'older' (perhaps, 60 years and over). In what ways do these persons reflect the stereotypes listed above? What conclusions can you draw about stereotypes from this exercise?

16.3.1

Ageism Across Groups

While ageism is usually associated with the elderly, and they feel its effects consistently, other age groups also suffer from age-related prejudices, stereotypes and discrimination.

Children

Young children are considered a most vulnerable minority group as they tend to be regarded as the property of



Fig. 16.1 People of all ages can suffer from age-related discrimination

their parents or guardians. This may work out well if they receive protection and security. But the very fact that parenthood tends to be portrayed in a positive light makes the plight of children who live in abusive homes all the more difficult to detect. Children are dependent on their caregivers, yet because they are very young and dependent, and virtually powerless, they are routinely beaten and neglected. These acts of age discrimination hinge on the age range of children. Abusers may not attempt such actions with older children. Ageism in this context is based on prejudicial attitudes and stereotypes which portray children not as individuals in their own right but as 'property' which can be treated according to the wishes of the owner.

Young people

Adolescents suffer from many negative stereotypes, which they resent because it lumps them into a uniform group, not recognising variation and individuality. They are characterised as obsessed with sexuality, loud and anti-establishment music, the use of alcohol and drugs, the maintenance of a bizarre dress code and being easily susceptible to crime.

The mass media build these images and the advertising media consistently target this group, as adolescents seem able to tap into their parents' pockets very efficiently. The mass media also portray both youths involved in crime and school crime in sensational ways. These negative stereotypes affect adolescents, especially in the ways they devise to resist and react to the low levels of respect for them in the society. In fact, youths could assess situations

where they are being stereotyped as 'bad' – for example, how security personnel interact with them and how they are closely monitored in stores and shops.

At the same time there are prevailing prejudices associated with youth which paint them in a positive light. Young people are seen as beautiful, agile, flexible, creative, happy, carefree, friendly, upbeat, and so on. These stereotypes actually work against young people because they are not seen as individuals with problems, and especially in the transition from childhood to adulthood they need help, care and guidance. These are not likely to be forthcoming from those who think youth is a positive stage of being. Similarly, positive stereotypes of older persons as wise and kind may be very wrong. A person is hardly likely

to show wisdom and kindness at 65 if she or he did not show those qualities before. Thus, stereotypes do not help us to understand others but they seem very resistant to change.

Older people

It is important for us to realise that there are differences among those described as 'older'. Demographic standards refer to 'old age' as between 65 and 75 years. 'Old, old age' refers to those between 75 and 85 years, and the 'oldest old' are older than 85 years, but those aged 60–70 years live very different lives compared to the oldest old.

- The majority of persons aged 65 to 80 are able-bodied enough to take care of themselves. Most of them will probably have either a major or a minor chronic illness (arthritis, heart problems and deafness are the most common) but can hardly as a group be labelled sick, infirm or frail. Many persons at 65 and over are still active members of the workforce.
- The oldest old are more likely to need some help in getting about, yet only a few are institutionalised. When they have multiple illnesses at this age they are indeed more likely to be sick, frail and infirm.

Where 'mental deterioration' is concerned, however, older people normally retain all their faculties even as they grow older. They may slow down, especially if they have to learn something new such as computer skills, but they may also be slow to learn because they are less motivated than others. It is a fallacy to believe that old age equates with losing one's mental faculties or with

mental illness. While Alzheimer's is a serious disease which may afflict any category of older person, for the majority of old people there is only a minor loss of long-term memory. Perhaps among all the stereotypes listed in Activity 16.4, the one which has the greatest ring of truth is the problem of depression. It is a common problem of old age, yet a little-known fact is that it is also a common problem among the younger age groups.

If we examine these stereotypes we realise that all have some kernel of truth but they are unfair in how they apply certain traits or dispositions to a whole group of people whose members are extremely diverse. For example, from those who study ageing (gerontologists) we learn that males and females age differently and have different characteristics. Women tend to outlive men by several years so they are more likely to experience widowhood. They are also more likely to be ill, and the most recent research suggests that they may feel more pain than men. Other than gender, there are age differences in ageing even among the aged! The span of 25 years between 65-year-olds and 90-year-olds represent a 'generation

gap', across which differently aged elderly people may have very different needs. Thus, the older age groups in society are very diverse but stereotypes portray them as uniform, and this dehumanises them, making them into an 'object' apart from mainstream society.

Ageist stereotypes and prejudices operate to produce behaviours or acts which are discriminatory. The person guilty of discrimination may not be engaging in it as a conscious act but rather out of a socialisation response to a minority group which is habitually devalued. Another minority group could be the indigenous population in Guyana. While they number several thousands, it is not numbers which determine the status of being a 'minority' but the fact that the group is marginalised, that it is very different from the dominant groups and that it cannot do much to change its position. Older people, then, are a minority group in the unenviable position of being seen as the opposite to youth – some of the prevailing prejudices and stereotypes about youth portray them as synonymous with beauty, vigour, happiness and endless possibilities (Box 16.2).

BOX 16.2 Constructing dependence

Stereotypes and prejudices which portray older persons as dependants, depriving younger persons of resources, stem from the nature of modern urban and industrial life. In agrarian societies or in rural areas today older persons lead busy and productive lives and often occupy a privileged place in the family structure and in the village or community. They work as farmers, gardeners and fishermen, and as craftsmen and artisans, and sell in the market. At home they are usually the ones to see about cooking, cleaning and taking care of the very young. Through storytelling they teach younger members about morals and the history and folklore of their country.

This kind of involvement in the life of the family, in being engaged in work, in making one's own decisions, in playing an important role in children's lives, is less likely to be found in an urban environment where retirement laws send the older people home. Urban areas have less potential in terms of keeping the older person busy and productive. Many become homebound, seeing to domestic chores to help the family but suffering from the lack of an active life with a wide range of social contacts. Urban environments also tend to be more unsafe and family members may put restrictions on their older relative to curtail too much independence.

A set of circumstances, then, in urban areas conspires to construct old age as a dependent state and reinforce the widespread prejudices associated with this group. Having been deprived of work, the older person now becomes dependent on welfare and pensions. At work, employers often use a strategy of ending older workers' contracts and hiring younger workers at reduced pay. There are few training programmes which actively target older workers to help them overcome resistance to new computerised technologies at the workplace; sometimes they themselves leave because they are intimidated by the new learning involved.

Through all these changes necessitated by transformations in the economy and social life, old age has been reconstructed. Modernisation has brought a devaluing of the role of older people in social life. The notion that paid employment now defines being a productive member of society makes those persons who are not playing an active part in the labour market seem irrelevant. With few opportunities to engage them meaningfully after retirement, older people have had no choice but to become dependent on others. Stereotypes portraying them as a dependent and needy group on which a large amount of resources is spent describe a condition largely brought on by modern economic life.

16.3.2 Ageist Behaviours

Examples of discriminatory practices against the older age groups include the following:

- **Social activities.** Older people are excluded from social activities, restricting their recreational possibilities. Many older folks are homebound because of the few opportunities for them to go out and socialise. Going to church assumes a big role, but researchers say that this is only so if the person was already a regular churchgoer.
- **Media stereotypes.** In the mass media older persons are either absent or stereotyped as ‘the wicked stepmother or mother-in-law’, ‘the grouchy old man’, the ‘old maid’, the ‘nosey neighbour’. There are few important, dynamic roles played by older women on television and cinema, though there seems to be a variety of roles for older men.
- **Jokes.** Older persons are made the butt of jokes – aspersions about their hearing, seeing and memory functions, and their involvement in sexual activities. Researchers say that sexual activity among older people is made to seem odd, even ‘dirty’, because it is embarrassing for others to think that their parents and grandparents may be involved in such activities.
- **Health care.** Medical research has not focused on *geriatric* problems as much as those to do with other age groups. This becomes a national problem as the numbers in the older age groups keep rising with increased longevity and better standards of living. Medical facilities and expertise, then, are at present inadequate to cater for this growing population. This neglect is due to the prejudice that older people may be more ‘expendable’ than others.
- **Employment.** At the workplace, there is a reluctance to hire older workers as there is the attitude that they are harder to fit in, especially in a young staff, that they may be technologically slow and that they do not have innovative ideas. Perhaps the greatest act of discrimination which is enshrined in law is compulsory retirement, usually at 65 years. This is an arbitrary number and one wonders how it was chosen. The rationale is that younger workers need to find jobs and so older workers have to leave at some point. If you are in paid employment, retirement happens whether or not you want to continue working (Box 16.2).
- **Language.** Medical language tends to portray the older person as a stereotype. For example, in medical literature and practice, a 60-year-old may be described as ‘elderly’, which implies to some extent ‘sickly and frail’. In certain scenarios you may find older people described as if they are owned and somebody’s responsibility: for

example, ‘our seniors’, ‘our loved ones’. This kind of paternalistic language is not used for the younger adult population but stereotypes about older people influence us to treat them as if they were children.



SUMMARY

Prejudices and stereotypes about ageing are commonplace. Younger members of the society are socialised into such prejudices and stereotypes via their friends, families and the media, and accept and participate in discriminatory acts against older people without thinking much about it. In fact, in social life there is more than a tendency to treat older people either as if they were invisible or as if they were children. In other countries there has been an awareness of this issue and deliberate attempts are made to integrate older persons into social activities and to recognise their limited financial circumstances by offering senior meals at reduced prices in restaurants and the like. The Caribbean is slow to follow suit in recognising this persisting problem of social injustice.

16.4

Gender discrimination

Discrimination on the grounds of someone’s gender is called **sexism**. Sexist practices are directed at both men

Sexism refers to prejudices, stereotypes and acts of discrimination against people based on their sex and not on individual merits or failures.

and women. For example, the assumption that a man is the breadwinner in a house or even the head of the household is sexist when the only criterion used to come to this conclusion is that he is a man. It is sometimes difficult to identify sexism in daily life because it is so much a part of our gender socialisation.

In Chapter 14 we looked at feminist perspectives in the Caribbean and at how gender ideologies developed through our socialisation into the prejudices and stereotypes common under the gender system known as patriarchy. Feminist thought is mainly concerned with ways of reducing social injustice through developing a gender-just society. This section focuses on examples of sexual discrimination resulting from sexist prejudices

and stereotypes. While the big issues in studying sexism tend to emphasise sexual discrimination as experienced by women, men are also victims of sexist beliefs and attitudes, and men too suffer acts of sexual discrimination, particularly at the hand of other men (Box 16.3). Just like ageism, sexism results in a breach of social justice, with negative implications for Caribbean development.

16.4.1 Sexist Beliefs and Attitudes

Patriarchy gives rise to several fairly stable sexist beliefs and attitudes (or prejudices and stereotypes) which threaten social justice. For example, to justify the belief that one sex (the male) is superior to the other (female), biological, religious and historical evidence is commonly offered. The male is clearly shown to have certain characteristics of physical strength and endurance

that most women cannot demonstrate, and this is why sports, for example, are segregated. It would be an unfair competition to pit men, clinically proven to be stronger, against women in the sporting arena (though in some sports women do compete on equal terms with men).

ACTIVITY 16.5

1. Suggest at least ONE example of an argument arising from both religion AND history which is typically used to suggest that men are superior to women.
2. Name some sports today where men and women compete together rather than separately. Analyse why women are able to compete successfully in these sports.

BOX 16.3 Sexism among males

We witness sexist beliefs and practices among boys and men when a judgement is made about an individual based on whether he is or is not being 'manly' enough – referring to some universal conception about what a man should be like. This has nothing to do with the person himself but with a set of behaviours which men seem to think defines them and their activities. When a judgement is being made about a particular male it is therefore made in relation to a whole sex group known as men – and this is sexist.

For example, the extent to which a man joins in and participates with other men in 'masculine' activities, such as sport or talking about sport, adds to or subtracts from the assessment being made of him. A man who is not very interested in sport will have a difficult time in maintaining his place in a group of male friends. He will be on the periphery and often the butt of jokes. This is sexist because in this case he is being measured against some yardstick which lays down explicitly what are considered to be 'manly' behaviours. And these behaviours do not recognise different masculinities but tend to be rigidly uniform. For example, men wear a limited number of colours and colour combinations to demonstrate quite clearly how they differ from females. Only a few are engaged in such 'marginal' male pastimes as ballet and poetry. And to embark on a career move to be a secretary or a nurse means that a man will probably have experienced several heart-to-heart chats with those

seeking his interest. In each case these are forms of sexist discrimination perpetrated by men on 'other' men.

In a recent study of gender and school achievement in the Caribbean, researchers found that boys in secondary schools tended to have certain 'rules' about studying at school. If other members of the group were studying for a test, then it was easier to settle down to study. If, however, the group was just talking and laughing or deciding to play a game it became very problematic for an individual to go against this male camaraderie and opt to study. If he did, he would get several good-natured remarks thrown his way at first, but if he persisted in such 'odd' behaviour, over time he would definitely cease to be a core member of that group. And the transition would not be amicable because it would be recognised that he was renouncing certain of the agreed beliefs and attitudes which males who are 'true males' should have. The fear of being labelled 'other' by one's own male friends controls to a great extent the behaviour of men and boys. And this 'otherness' has largely to do with judgements about how close the behaviours of boys and men come to those of girls and women.

There is, then, an extreme distaste on the part of men for tolerating seemingly 'feminine' tastes or traits in other men. This is the issue which causes the charge or accusation that some men actually hate women (explored in Box 16.4).

Based on this ‘evidence’ from multiple sources, it seemed logical to conclude that men and women are fundamentally different and that this difference should be reflected in their social roles and behaviours. For example, the ‘weaker sex’ should be confined to the home environs and not have to deal with the pressures of going out into the world to make a living. She should be dependent on her husband to take care of her. In return, as the childbearer she should be the homemaker – providing a nurturing and stable home environment for rearing children and catering to the needs of her husband. These appear to be ‘natural’ roles ordained by the Creator and reflected in biology. One of the criticisms of this sort of thinking is that it reduces all men and women to essentialist categories where gender alone suggests what you should be doing and what you should be concerned about. This thinking is also unjust as it does not entertain at all the idea of equality of the sexes.

Sexism is also evident in how each group thinks of the other. There is the tendency among men today to conclude that ‘women are taking over the world’, as they witness women entering all fields of endeavour and winning legal battles to regulate men’s obligations to family. Women, on the other hand, are more than likely to say that patriarchy somehow survives even as they move up the socioeconomic ladder and that they encounter discrimination at home and in the workplace. They conclude that it is still ‘a man’s world’. These beliefs and stereotypes are sexist and unjust because in each case they are attributed to an entire sex group, only recognising the sex category and nothing else as important.

ACTIVITY 16.6

1. Consider the statement that ‘highly educated women in higher socioeconomic groups are more independent of men than those in lower socioeconomic groups’. Is this a sexist statement? Observe that although the focus is on women, the statement is not attributing their independence to their sex but to their accomplishments.
2. Examine where you stand on the gender equality debate. Compare your ideas to that of a colleague on the two statements below:
 - a. ‘For gender equality to take place, the differences between men and women will have to be removed.’
 - b. ‘It is not necessary to remove the differences between men and women, but to end sexism, or the oppression of women by men.’

Resentment tends to lead to stereotyping, and acts of discrimination have become more pronounced as the feminist movement has gathered steam over the last thirty or so years. It has led to what is called the ‘war of the sexes’ and charges of **misogyny** and **misandry**

Misogyny is a term used to describe men’s hatred of women.

Misandry describes women’s hatred of men.

(Box 16.4). However, sexism occurs in different ways and is not always immediately evident. Hostile sexism describes the traditional kinds of prejudices under patriarchy where women are stereotyped in negative ways – clinging, manipulating, emotional, dependent. Benevolent sexism, on the other hand, also under patriarchy, sees women as needing protection and care, unable to make important life decisions and so men should not be as exacting with them. The whole issue of sexism and social justice seems to turn on whether we consider males and females to be equal, whether they are different, or whether they could be different and equal.

You will probably find in your discussions that the idea of generalisation keeps cropping up. The urge to impose order on social life leads us into holding several prejudices and stereotypes which simplify and generalise how people are by just not recognising, for example, that a range of masculinities and femininities exist. While motherhood is a biological role which women undertake, it does not necessarily mean that all home-related obligations become theirs. A mother can also be a highly successful career-oriented person if her partner undertakes a more nurturing role. We saw earlier that one of the roots of prejudice lay in our reluctance to deal with complexity and a desire to try to fit everybody into preordained categories. When men and women do not fit easily into these ‘boxes’, society employs a range of coercive strategies – humour, taunts, ostracism, forms of sexual harassment and physical violence – to urge conformity to gender roles.

16.4.2 Sexual Discrimination in the Workplace

Sexual discrimination is any unfair action motivated by a person’s sex. Thus, to promote men because they are men is an act of sexual discrimination. The labour market is an area where women typically feel the effects of sexual discrimination and experience social injustice. The lowest-paying jobs in the society are reserved for women, perhaps because employers feel that they are less likely to instigate actions for better wages and conditions of work. Clerks, secretaries, receptionists, store attendants

and those employed in retail and fast food outlets tend to be overwhelmingly female and lowly paid. While there are not many opportunities to work one's way up in such establishments, the few men present are the ones usually selected for supervisory or lower management positions. In jobs where many women are present, employers tend to feel that a man should be in charge. Not only in lowly

paid jobs but also in education, at all levels, women predominate, but the school principal or the university professor tends to be male – a phenomenon referred to as the 'educational harem'.

Men dominate the highest-paying jobs. Women who rise to high levels in the corporation structure seldom make it to the very top. They are obstructed in their

BOX 16.4 Misogyny and misandry

While there are discriminatory practices in most religions which tend to exclude women from higher office, or from congregating with men, or make special provisions of dress for female worshippers, some say that these are merely sexist. Others say that they reflect deeper *misogynist* attitudes and beliefs and that we are reluctant to admit that a great deal of the sexist beliefs and practices we witness are actually related to some men's hatred of women.

These persons say that the term 'hatred' is very strong, and we may shy away from it, but that one way we can better understand the issue is to think about who is a bigot. A bigot, a person who hates or is prejudiced against a member of another group, does not necessarily advertise this, except perhaps to close friends and family. It does not have to result in violence but rather hatred could reside in refusing to acknowledge 'the Other' as fully and equally human and be compassionate about them. Thus, the jokes made about women, the tendency to talk loudly over a woman speaking, forcing women in different ways to take on all the housework and domestic chores, treating women as 'objects' (for example, sex objects) and even 'womanising', are viewing women as not being on equal terms with men. They are the 'Other' that should be treated differently. Misogynists, like racists, can have friends belonging to the 'Other' group (a misogynist may even marry – probably someone he believes is 'different' to how he sees women on the whole), and this, they say, 'proves' that they are not racists or misogynists. Thus, feminists say that hatred of women is not at all easy to discern in our society because it tends to be masked in myriad ways by activities which seem to admire women – for example, pornography, philandering, being protective of women, making decisions for them, and so on.

The belief that some men hate women is further developed by feminists in relation to how men tend to treat homosexual men. A man-to-man relationship

cannot be tolerated because in such a relationship a man is taking the place of an inferior being, a woman, and acting like a woman. This is repugnant behaviour for a man and 'straight' men are driven to harass and even physically assault men engaged in such demeaning behaviours.

A postmodern view of this relationship between the genders sees it differently. Men may feel that the absolutely essential and highest quality of being a 'man' is a sexual relationship with a woman. Under patriarchy this often translates into possession of a woman and seeing the female as a 'sex object' to be dominated. This defines a 'man' and it is this 'manliness' (macho behaviours, aggression, sports consciousness, leadership qualities) which they believe makes them attractive to women. Anything which threatens this ideal of manhood, then, must be stamped out, because it is not real, it is 'queer'. It undermines all that they hold sacred, their very conception of self; so homosexuals, by trying to possess another man as if he were a woman, are threatening this dominant model of masculinity. In other words, homosexuals are effectively saying that 'this is another kind of masculinity, different from the others, but just as valid'. 'Straight' men see this as interfering with and devaluing their own idea of manhood. This cannot be tolerated, and so under patriarchy the result is *homophobia* – fear and hatred of homosexuals – including taunting, violence and sometimes murder.

Misandry describes the situation where women hate men. Both men and women agree that it is not at all common, but men in particular say that, since the strengthening of the feminist movement, extreme views urge hatred for men. This, they say, has resulted in many feminists becoming committed lesbians. This time men charge women with being sexist because the reasons associated with hatred for men all seem to hinge on being a man, and not certain categories of men with typical kinds of behaviours, for example abusers.

careers by the sexist attitudes of those making the selection, which proclaim women to be inferior, as well as by women's own internalisation of sexist attitudes. For example, women tend not to bid for the highest positions because they feel it may be unseemly and construed as unfeminine for a woman to command authority over large numbers of men. This phenomenon has been called the 'glass ceiling' and limits women's opportunities.

In addition, a most blatant source of inequality is that men are often paid more for their services than women in the same job. This is a burning issue, particularly among professional groups of lawyers, doctors, economists and business executives, whose salaries are large, but to be underpaid because you are a woman is still dehumanising. Trinidad and Tobago provides a good example of this. While female participation in the labour force has increased over time in Trinidad and Tobago, it is still low compared to male participation and it is lower than that of Barbados and Jamaica. Furthermore, women do not earn as much as men. While the GDP per capita for Trinidad and Tobago averaged about US\$12614 in 2005, women only earned US\$5645 (MPD, 1998–2001; Roopnarine and Ramrattan 2012).

Thus in many occupational areas women earn substantially less than men *in the same jobs*. This is entrenched sexual discrimination. Employers counter this claim by saying that they are not as sure that women will remain in employment because they are the ones likely to interrupt their careers for pregnancy and childrearing.

16.4.3 Sexual Harassment

Forms of sexual discrimination where individual women are targeted for unwelcome sexual advances, promised job promotions for sexual favours, subjected to inappropriate touching or other physical contact, made to listen to sexist jokes about women or called names portraying women as sex objects (as well as stalking) are all examples of sexual harassment. Both women and men could be harassers but in the overwhelming majority of cases the harasser is a man and the victim a woman. It is a form of sexual discrimination because it is perpetrated on a woman just because she is a woman. In recent years, women have been making claims that they are being sexually harassed, particularly at the workplace – a trend more prevalent in the US and other developed countries than in Caribbean countries. Here, legal authorities are still grappling with how to define and conceptualise sexual harassment as an offence. They teeter between

the lobby that sees it as an issue of sexual discrimination that threatens social justice and equality, and the feminist lobby which prefers to view the issue as one of violence to women. In the meantime, sexual harassment continues in schools, public places and in homes. It may be assessed as 'harmless' or women may put up with it in order to safeguard their jobs. Under patriarchy, where women are the 'second sex' and largely felt to be inferior to men, this harassment has been a 'normal' part of the process of gender socialisation for both boys and girls.

Research mini-project

Survey recent legislation in your country to see whether there is a comprehensive body of laws which address sexual harassment. List any laws which exist with their provisions and assess how effective they are likely to be.

Guidelines about how to react when faced with sexual harassment are fairly consistent and include confronting the harasser and/or making a formal complaint. However, in practice victims are more likely to try to pretend that the situation is not happening, ignore the innuendos or endure in silence, hoping it will just end. They may also try to avoid persons and situations where or with whom such encounters arise. This is seen in Caribbean women's response to catcalls, sexist jokes, leering and uncalled-for endearments. Feminists are of the opinion that the reluctance of females to confront or report their harassers stems from their acceptance of the 'fact' that men oppress women, that it has always been so and is not likely to change, and for many who have learned 'to live with it' it is not perceived as a serious problem.

In the Caribbean, as in the US and other countries, *Anita Hill versus Clarence Thomas* became an important watershed case (Box 16.5). For the first time men and women were debating their experiences, and while men were aghast at the kinds of 'normal' behaviours which now seemed to be illegal, women felt some degree of relief that at least the work environment might now be less sexist than before. Anita Hill's accusations brought the whole issue of sexual harassment at the workplace to the attention of men and women in the Caribbean. It also highlighted gender issues in a different way – the people who judged the matter were 90 per cent male. This fact energised feminists the world over to work for more women to enter the political arena.

BOX 16.5**Anita Hill vs Clarence Thomas**

In 1991 President George Bush nominated Clarence Thomas to fill a vacancy in the US Supreme Court. Thomas was an African-American federal judge, with a conservative bias in his rulings. In the US, nominees for such high public office usually have to undergo questioning before certain committees, such as the Senate Judiciary Committee. Thomas was questioned on issues the public had raised, including his conservative stand on affirmative action, his lack of experience as a federal judge and his views on abortion. The committee's deliberations were inconclusive and so the hearings moved to the Senate to be put to a vote.

Anita Hill, a law professor, made accusations that Thomas had sexually harassed her when they had both worked at the Equal Employment Commission. She alleged that he had repeatedly asked her out on dates even after being refused many times. He had mentioned sexually explicit subjects in their

conversations, such as pornography, and used his hands to show comparisons of men's sexual organs and women's breasts. There was instant uproar and a media frenzy erupted. Hill faced a battery of inquisitors, mostly white males.

Thomas denied every allegation, and was eventually confirmed as a judge of the US Supreme Court. The members of the committee who questioned Hill seemed to believe that if her allegations were true, then she should have left the job and not continued to work with Thomas. Feminists were outraged at this lack of sensitivity about women's lives – why should Hill leave her job when she had done nothing wrong, and her education and ambitions had landed her in a job she wanted? It was clear that a committee of men debating a charge of sexual harassment (which to them was a non-issue) worked against Hill.

16.4.4 Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is an extreme form of discrimination against women. It counts as sexual discrimination because to a large extent it is perpetrated by men on women. However, children and older persons at home can become victims as well.

Domestic violence entails a wide range of abuse. It includes:

- inflicting physical, sexual and psychological trauma on another person in the family or household, or someone with whom one has a close relationship;
- withholding economic support and wielding power over a person who becomes afraid for his or her personal safety or for that of loved ones;
- intimidation of someone using either physical or mental domination so that they feel obliged to do something they do not want to do.

There are many easily identified immediate causes for spousal abuse and other forms of domestic violence. Abuse tends to occur in homes where a man is addicted to drugs or alcohol, where frustration levels may build up due to unemployment, poverty or family disputes, and where there is a suspicion of infidelity. These are the immediate triggers which may unleash a protracted scenario of escalating violence in the home. However, the root cause is the belief by the male partner that women are subordinate and that his wife or partner is his property.

He can only maintain these ideas and behaviours, though, if women are powerless. And many women are to a large extent powerless in their relationships. They rely on their abuser (and this may occur in homes of all socioeconomic brackets) for financial support, especially when children are involved (Box 16.6). Men's power, too, prevails when a woman decides that this is a 'home problem' and chooses to live with the violence.

The use of power, aggression and violence in the home are tactics which are used by men to intimidate women (as well as children and older people) and keep them under control. Consider this train of events:

1. Isolation is used as a psychological tactic to weaken the will of the wife or partner. She may be forbidden to leave the house or prevented from visiting family, friends and her church (her support network).
2. Psychological tactics continue as she is subject to different forms of degradation – sexual abuse, verbal abuse, belittled in front of others, expected to do the most menial chores and having to ask for money.
3. The situation at home may deteriorate to the point where every move has to be weighed and second-guessed, especially when the abuser starts enforcing trivial demands. For example, he may insist on certain minor things as if they were a matter of life and death, such as making demands that the woman change her appearance (hairstyle, dress, make-up) immediately, or bring all his meals to him with perfect table settings.

BOX 16.6**Violence against women in the Caribbean**

Many reports on violence against women in the Caribbean have been prepared to inform the work being done internationally by the United Nations Conferences on Women. The Fourth World Conference on Women was held in 1995 in Beijing, China, and from that a Platform for Action was agreed upon that focused on the empowerment of women in all spheres of social life, especially power-sharing in homes, workplaces and public life. In 2000 Beijing +5, which was a review process of that Platform for Action, again called for reports from all members countries to assess each region's progress towards achieving gender equality. Many women's groups, NGOs and government agencies, as well as CARICOM initiatives, have been involved in these international working groups in compiling statistics and analysing the trends in violence against women. They have raised awareness of the problem of violence against women in the Caribbean and have been the main advocates for gender-based law reform. Among the many organisations involved are:

- the Institute for Gender and Development Studies, UWI (IGDS);
- the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM);
- the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA);
- the Association of Women's Organizations of Jamaica (AWOJA);
- Men Against Violence Against Women (MAVAW).

However, even with all this public exposure of the issue, violence against women continues to be the most serious problem faced by women and children in the Caribbean.

Bailey (1999), in the National Report on Gender Violence Against Women in Jamaica, lists several myths which serve to maintain high levels of domestic violence in the society. For example, there is the prevailing belief that females provoke rape by wearing tight or otherwise suggestive clothing, that women tend to enjoy rough treatment and that the perpetrators of these crimes are not normal (most likely being drug addicts or mentally unstable, or even from lower socioeconomic groups). Bailey dispels these myths by showing that the rape of very young children and older persons demonstrates that it is not a crime of passion or lust but one of violence. The mass media, dance hall music and the pornography industry to a large extent portray women as sex objects to whom unspeakable things could be done. Rapists and those who commit incest have no set of well-defined characteristics – they can come from any group of men, including those with no previous history of violence, drug or alcohol abuse; in other words, they may be apparently law-abiding men with what look like normal families.

For a long time police officers have been reluctant to intervene in domestic disputes because they were deemed to be 'family business'. At the same time, many cases of violence went underreported because of the shame and embarrassment the women felt on having to make public disclosure. Even when reports are made, the police say that victims frequently withdraw their accusations as they depend on the perpetrator for economic support. Violence against women is an ingrained social habit in the Caribbean, and while hotlines, women's bureaus, shelters, safe houses and counselling are now widely available, a major victory in the struggle against domestic violence would be to recruit men in greater numbers to address not only the symptoms but the causes as well.

4. The abuser now controls the woman and others in the house by threats to kill and maim, to pursue and capture if anyone leaves or to cut off all finances. These psychological forms of abuse tend to lead eventually to sexual and physical violence in the form of rape (Box 16.7).

It is difficult to know how much violence goes on in families, or the extent and nature of spousal, child and elder abuse, although today more than ever people are making reports, if not to the police, to hotlines, help

desks and shelters. In fact, it may be reportage which has increased, rather than the incidence of actual violence. Consider the significance of the data below:

- In 1999 Morrison and Biehl found that in Latin America and the Caribbean 'between 30 and 50 per cent of adult women with partners are victims of psychological abuse each year, while 10 to 35 per cent suffer physical violence' (p 5).
- In 2004 UNICEF reported that 70 per cent of all sexual crimes reported in Jamaica involved children and 119 children were murdered in that year.

- In 2005 the group known as Help & Shelter carried out a study in Guyana which found that the incidence of domestic violence was on the rise and there were increases in the numbers of serious injuries and murders.
- In 2011 training was set up for law enforcement officers with the Ottawa police department, when it was concluded that across the Caribbean one-third of all women had been physically abused within a relationship (Government of Grenada, 2011).
- In 2012 a study by Paul Doth of the Suriname Bible Society suggested that domestic violence affected as many as 67 per cent of all women over their lifetime in his country.

Domestic violence is now recognised as a little-understood social problem which has links to violence in the wider society. It is not only a family problem or typical of dysfunctional families. Sexist violence against women in families is reflective of the larger picture of discrimination and abuse of women and children in society as a whole. For example, Caribbean societies were founded on genocide and exploitation and continued under the barbarous systems of slavery and indentureship. Independence has not brought a lessening of the conditions which tend to exacerbate violence – social stratification, poverty, marginalisation and patriarchy. While all groups suffer under these forms of social injustice, women and children are the most vulnerable.

SUMMARY

Sexism, oppresses women and keeps them in a subordinate role to men. While individual women may achieve much more than some men, in society as a whole the prevailing sexist prejudices and stereotypes continue to portray women as inferior beings, as the 'Other', dominated by men. The highest offices in politics, religion, business, industry, medicine, law and other spheres tend to be the almost exclusive preserve of men. This is a breach of social justice, in that one whole group of humankind is being obstructed from achieving equality. But sexism is more than the phenomenon of social injustice suffered by women; it plays a crucial role in socialising the next generation and has the potential, if not addressed, to perpetuate the social and family violence we are experiencing today.

16.5

Race, ethnicity, class and creed

Discrimination also occurs when groups are targeted because of their culture. Someone's race or religion often indicates their ethnic or cultural identification. This section discusses prejudices, stereotypes and acts of discrimination based on *racism*, *classism* and *creedism*. In all cases these beliefs, attitudes and actions threaten social justice and development in Caribbean societies.

- An extreme example of these types of discrimination in Europe was Hitler's racist idea that people of Aryan (white) stock in Germany were the superior race and that the Jews were inferior. This **racism** led to

Racism is the negative (or positive) value placed on a group of people who belong to a particular race or have a certain skin colour because they are believed to be inferior (or superior).

genocide when millions of Jews were killed in Europe between 1935 and 1945. It also led to the downfall of Hitler's regime, partly because the contribution made by Jews to the German economy, and especially to science, before the Nazis came to power was much more important than had been realised.

- In the colonial Caribbean, grassroots syncretic religions such as the Shouter Baptists, Myal and Revivalism were felt by the majority of the population to be inferior to the established religions. This **creedism** led to persecution of some adherents in the

Creedism refers to any form of prejudice, stereotype or act of discrimination based on religion. Again such beliefs and actions are based on the idea that a particular religion is inferior (or superior) in some way.

colonial era, and to lesser forms of discrimination later on, though attitudes are now changing.

- Caribbean societies were created under conditions of rigid social stratification and today, while the barriers are no longer 'rigid', they are quite stable. This **classism** perpetuates class segregation and the

Classism refers to the negative (or positive) ways that persons of a particular socioeconomic group are portrayed. Those of high socioeconomic standing tend to be regarded as articulate, beautiful and to have good 'breeding'. Those of a poorer or working-class background tend to be seen as rough, loud and needy.

potential for classist prejudices and behaviours, and making social mobility difficult.

BOX 16.7 Rape

Rape is one form of sexual violence and is both a domestic abuse issue and part of the larger societal picture of a violent society and violence against women. While men are sometimes the victims of rape, particularly by other men, the majority of rape victims are women and the majority of rapists are men. In the Caribbean, rape is a crime which seems difficult to control. In the Bahamas, where rape, including spousal rape, is illegal, there were 97 rapes reported in 2012, a slight decrease on the previous year, when there were 107 (OSAC, 2013). However, local sources indicate that rape is underrecorded, and that the true figure may be higher (Virgil, 2014).

One reason it is difficult to get a full picture of the incidence of rape in the society is that victims do not always report the crime against them to the authorities. Rape victims tend to be intimidated by the public and insensitive nature of the process of reporting a rape – being medically examined, identifying the rapist and participating in lengthy court proceedings. Stereotypes about rape add to the torment of the victim. It used to be thought of as a sexual crime and many victims were blamed as inciting desire through wearing suggestive clothing or displaying themselves in a way which might arouse a man. Research, however, shows that it is more accurately described as an act of violence because the rapist is primarily motivated by the urge to dominate and control. Forcible sex is the rapist's way of expressing hostility and the need for power. Thus, rapists are not usually people who are deprived of sexual intercourse; many of them are married or in steady relationships.

Even though rape is now considered a violent crime, court appearances continue to be a harrowing experience for the victim. This arises from the difficulty of proving that the act happened and the intense grilling of the victim which is necessary to prove that it did or did not

happen. There are two major issues. In cases where two adults are involved, the court wants to know that the act was done without the consent of the complainant. To prove that the act happened against her will is very difficult and often boils down to his word against hers. This becomes a typical defence strategy for a rapist – that they were having 'consensual sex' – and is often invoked in 'date rape' and where the victim and rapist know each other. The other issue concerns corroboration of the story. The court cannot convict on the victim's word alone; there must be a witness or circumstances which corroborate her story. Since many rapes occur without witnesses, the victim has to be able to provide corroborating evidence. The judge and jury can perhaps infer that the act did happen if the victim appeared to be distressed or disoriented immediately after the incident, for example when seeking help or when telling someone. These witnesses are more easily believed if they are not related to the victim. The court also has to be convinced that the complainant did not initially give her consent and then change her mind, or if she did change her mind in this way the court has to decide whether the alleged rapist honestly believed that the initial consent was still operating.

Rape within marriage (*spousal rape*) was not considered to be a crime until recently. Other than the difficulty of proving that a criminal act did occur, it was widely believed that such an act could not logically take place between married partners as marriage implied 'permission' to have sexual intercourse and a wife was expected to attend to the needs of her husband. It is only with the relatively recent advocacy and lobby of women against violence to women that the crime of rape within marriage has been recognised. However, it is more likely to be proven in cases where the partners are separated or there is a restraining order in effect.

ACTIVITY 16.7

1. Identify ONE example of (a) racial prejudice, (b) religious prejudice and (c) class prejudice in Caribbean society today.
2. Show how in each case the prejudice you have identified is related to stereotypes of a racial, religious and social class group. (Take care to state a prejudice as an attitude to others which comes about through prejudgements, flimsy evidence or an unwillingness to see the 'Other' as people equal to any other group.)

16.5.1 Racial and Ethnic Discrimination

A prejudice is often related to a stereotype. For example, Chinese people, to a prejudiced way of thinking, think of little else but money. This is based on the stereotype of the Chinese shopkeeper, or the grocery, laundry, bakery or restaurant owner. While many Chinese people are engaged in these activities (and that is where the stereotype has some 'truth' in it) and they seem to have a flair and talent for these activities, we must recognise it as

a stereotype. An equal number of Chinese people may be involved in very different activities – teaching, painting, music, the professions – but their existence does not chip away at the stereotype because we tend to think of those individuals as just ‘different’. In China, all Chinese will be involved in different activities. This suggests that immigrant Chinese in a strange land developed ways of surviving based on memories, talent and networking with others to create a niche which they held on to. And it is this niche we associate with them today. By assigning certain characteristics to the Chinese people in this way, portraying them as very different from mainstream groups, we are setting up a situation where we can think of them as different enough to be the ‘Other’. When that happens, racial discrimination can quite easily follow, as when we mimic their language and make jokes about their names and their stature, the shape of their eyes, and so on. These are all acts of racial discrimination, and while we may assess these behaviours as only of minor importance, we still need to acknowledge that they are born of a prejudice which says ‘they are not equal to us’. Box 16.8 gives a case study of Sino-Jamaicans.

 **Brainstorm a number of circumstances or scenarios that would help to break down the stereotypes which any identified group in your society experiences.**

16.5.2 Institutional Discrimination

In the previous section we explored how racial prejudices based on stereotypes could fuel acts of racial discrimination. In society the prejudices and stereotypes of the dominant groups become entrenched in the social institutions of the land. This results in institutionalised forms of discrimination which serve to marginalise and exclude those groups without power in the society. For example, the educational system rewards those who belong to the middle and higher social classes, those of the established or other mainstream religions and the race/colour groups associated with higher social status.

Thus, the children of the poor, even when the state pours resources into education, receive an education not fitted to their needs and interests. It fits the needs and interests of those students who are excelling. The fact that this basic model of schooling is institutionalised as the curriculum means that the poor as a social class group (or their representatives) do not have the power to change the model to something more meaningful. What follows is institutionalised classism as the

secondary school system is segregated into schools where the children of the more affluent social groups excel and those where the children of the poor tend to be overwhelmingly black and, in some countries, Indian. It does not matter that black children are found at all levels, what matters is that they are concentrated in the failing schools, while children of other races – white, coloured or those of mixed race, Chinese, Syrian-Lebanese and also Indian – are concentrated in the excelling schools. In such a system there is little equity and social justice, yet the present model continues because it works for the dominant groups.

Class and racial discrimination become further entrenched in the society when the students leave school and face the labour market. Schools (or examinations) serve to sort and allocate students to different types of institutions with different curriculum orientations. Academic success at secondary school usually means a route into university and other forms of tertiary education, and eventually professional careers. Success in technical and technological subjects usually means further study too, usually in community colleges, and careers in business or technology. For those who fail, the lowest-paid jobs in the labour market may come their way, jobs which have little security or benefits or pension plans. Added to these segregated labour market prospects, the future for a young, poor black person is further limited by the hiring and firing policies of employers, who may be of a different race/colour or ethnic group.

It is well known that employers perform a ‘gatekeeping’ function in the system of social stratification. They have the power to employ deserving persons, who are qualified, who might be poor, and who need to earn a living and live a better life. However, employers tend to judge prospective employees on ascriptive criteria (race, colour, social class, physical appearance) which they were born with rather than achieved status (qualifications, credentials, experience). In so doing they tend to give the better jobs to those persons belonging to their own network of friends, family and connections. This is an example of discrimination based on race/colour or social class because the applicant is being judged on criteria he or she cannot change and about which the employer has prejudices and stereotypes. This scenario perpetuates poverty and conflict in the society as the obstructed groups recognise this gatekeeping function of the employer class. These tactics result in social reproduction – those who are poor stay poor and therefore do not get the opportunity to challenge the traditional elites for power in the society.

BOX 16.8**Sino-Jamaicans**

The term 'Sino' means Chinese. Several waves of immigration brought Chinese labourers and small traders to Jamaica in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Today, although they make up only 0.2 per cent of the population, they have been remarkably successful in business. On arrival they faced a situation where they were an extremely different racial and cultural group within the dominant Afro-Jamaican population. As a minority they encountered strong negative prejudices and stereotypes. They set themselves up in the retailing end of the grocery trade and were branded with the name 'Chin', and said to be dishonest and clannish. Even so, they began a process of interaction with the Jamaican public who were their customers. Because there was a shortage of Chinese women, many Chinese men in the early days cohabited with Afro-Jamaican women and a mixed race of Jamaican Chinese (or Sino-Jamaicans) were born. Most of the Chinese converted to the Roman Catholic faith.

They prospered and their grocery and other businesses spread across the island. A set of conditions came together in 1918, 1939 and 1965 which sharpened the racial tensions between the groups and resulted in the burning and looting of Chinese shops and injury to persons. In each instance there was economic hardship which hardened attitudes to the Chinese, who as 'aliens' in Jamaica were doing much better than 'natives'. There was also the popularity of Marcus Garvey and pan-Africanism (see Box 14.1), which nurtured black racial pride. Several Afro-Jamaican groups began a campaign to vilify the Chinese, calling for them to

go back to China, and for the government to close down their shops and accept that the Chinese were responsible for the increase in opium and alcohol sales and gambling (Bryan 1996).

In plural societies different ethnic groups live in daily contact while harbouring some prejudices and stereotypes about each other. These are apparently 'facts of life', given our socialisation regarding those who are different, as 'the Other'. Prejudices and stereotypes do not usually, however, erupt into extreme and violent cases of racial discrimination unless there are trigger factors – such as increasing poverty – which encourage people to look for scapegoats. It would not have been difficult to place the Chinese in that role because of the initial prejudices regarding them.

While the Jamaican Chinese population has to a large extent been creolised, they too have prejudices and stereotypes about the dominant group. Minorities also harbour negative attitudes and beliefs (but they have fears as well) regarding the dominant group. The Chinese focused on forming their institutions, and bringing in their relatives from China as workers. Even though they had liaisons with Afro-Jamaican women, they valued racial purity and sought brides and bridegrooms in China. This is a situation where racism was evident from the beginning and where racism continues, but to a large extent it has gone underground. It shows that it is not a simple matter of 'oppressors' or 'victims'. Often the oppressor class has quite close relationships with those who are oppressed, and the latter can find creative ways to resist and prosper even under conditions of oppression.

16.5.3 Creedism

Although there are a multitude of religions and cults in the Caribbean, the issue of creedism is not normally seen as a major social justice problem compared with ageism, sexism, racism and classism. All countries subscribe to freedom of religion as a basic human right. On a personal level, though, among individuals there will be examples of religious prejudices and stereotypes because of our socialisation into believing that whatever group we belong to is the superior group. There are incidents where Jehovah's Witnesses are referred to as 'Jehovah's Wickedness', evangelical and Pentecostal sects as 'small church', and Hindus as 'idol worshippers'. The attitude that the whole range of African-influenced

syncretic religions – namely Spiritual Baptists, Orisha, Pocomania and Shango – are nothing more than cults practising obeah or 'black magic' is a persistent prejudice and stereotype. Nevertheless, these only become social justice issues when they prevent or obstruct the faithful in some way – for example, from achieving social and economic equalisation – or interfere with productivity or adversely affect the quality of life of members.

At the institutional level of social life, however, we can detect examples of religious intolerance and attempt to assess its impact on social justice. Where denominational schooling is concerned, many institutions of learning, while not overtly prohibiting members of other religions from entering, make little provision for these students to

deepen their own religious life. In the past and today some of these schools, particularly during religious education, have attempted to provide alternative lessons for the benefit of such groups of students. But this has been limited to consideration of the major denominations and has not been relevant to all individual students' needs. The whole ethos of a denominational school, formally and informally, is to teach and practise their religion and to proselytise. Thus, in denominational schools on the whole, religion is the most important aspect of school life and the spiritual life of young persons of other faiths is neglected.

ACTIVITY 16.8

1. What has been your experience of religious instruction in primary and secondary schools?
2. Do you believe that a denominational school should take care of the spiritual needs only of students who belong to that religion?
3. Is the practice of having denominational schools an example of religious discrimination?

Largely because Caribbean societies are multi-religious, and tolerance is a human right, many contentious issues have arisen in state schools. In the past, instruction in the dominant religion was given because in the British tradition education has always been linked with religion. However, since state schools are for all citizens, that became problematic, especially in multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies. The issue is not as contentious all across the Caribbean. While Dominica is mainly Roman Catholic and Barbados is mainly Anglican, in Trinidad and Tobago, with large numbers of Hindus, Muslims, Roman Catholics, Anglicans and smaller numbers of all faiths, religion is a major divisive factor. The present practice is to favour ecumenical or interfaith services and prayers (often called 'civic religion') and to follow a policy of not emphasising any specific religion. Where freedom of religion is everybody's right, state schools are struggling to find ways to fulfil their obligation to deliver an all-round education to all students without seeming to favour one denomination or exclude others.

In the Caribbean the European traditions in religion largely dominate and in the past there were efforts to stamp out African and Christian syncretic religions which seemed to threaten national security (Box 16.9). Creedism, when it has occurred in the Caribbean at the institutional level, has not usually been concerned with dogma or beliefs, but seems to have been motivated

more by political and other considerations. The plight of the Shouter or Spiritual Baptists is a case in point and Box 16.9 shows that it was mainly the lack of success of the British authorities in curbing what seemed to be resistance to a British way of life which led to extreme acts of religious discrimination against this group. Today, however, charges of creedism are becoming increasingly evident as ethnic groups, particularly in multiracial and multi-religious societies, make a bid for more national recognition of their customs and practices. This can be seen as a reaction to centuries of creedism practised by the European traditions in religion, in which Christianity was thought to be superior to the other religions in the land. The removal of the Trinity Cross as Trinidad and Tobago's highest national award was largely a response to the objections of Hindu groups who viewed it as a Christian symbol. Creedism has occurred in the past, when political concerns erupted, and today we see creedism again coming to the fore, with politics, race and religion coinciding.

Research mini-project

Conduct independent research on the following issues:

- 1 *Examine any incident in the recent past, in your country or another Caribbean country, where students were refused entry to a school because of religious wear or practices.*
- 2 *Compare this incident and how it was resolved with how the matter of the hijab has been treated in France.*

As we have seen, creedism occurred in the past as blatant forms of religious discrimination against non-Christian or syncretic religions, especially where such religions seemed threatening to the political authorities. In contemporary life, aspects of creedism can be identified in how religious organisations, particularly denominational schools catering to the public, deal with other religions. It may not be a case of actively targeting members of other religions for discrimination but more a 'sin of omission' in seeing to the welfare of all. However, charges of creedism are more likely to be heard in the future as members of all religions try to establish themselves as identifiable national groups which have a right to be recognised as contributing to the development of the country. This is a political context where religion may be what is talked about, but the debate also rests on the race and class of members.

BOX 16.9

Discrimination against the Spiritual Baptists

Binding the head with a white cloth, ringing a bell at intervals during meetings, holding lighted candles in the hands, turbulent shaking of the body and limbs, shouting and the expression of guttural sounds, writing with chalk marks on the floor in addition to other practices were prohibited. Leader Archie, who had a church in Cocorite, St James, often had two watchmen at the door to herald the arrival of police. On seeing the police, the watchmen would shout loudly, 'Sampson, Sampson, the Philistines are upon you!' (Stephens, 1999, pp 28–29)

In 1917 the Shouters Prohibition Ordinance was passed in Trinidad and Tobago and became law. It was quite simply an act of religious discrimination which led to the persecution of members of this faith caught engaging in worship. They were beaten, arrested, fined and jailed and their houses of worship destroyed. The Shouter/Spiritual Baptist religion of the southern Caribbean (namely Grenada, Barbados, St Vincent and Trinidad and Tobago) is a Christian-based religion giving primary devotion to the Holy Spirit, but at the same time it has adopted African traditional forms of worship such as emotional singing, chanting, drumming

and dancing. It is also African in being a complete and comprehensive belief system which guides the practitioner through all aspects of life.

The Shouter Baptist religion is also a form of resistance which has survived the institution of slavery and enduring persecution during colonialism. It was ostensibly banned because it was too noisy, but various historians have suggested that a more cogent reason is that it was a vibrant, grassroots movement which seemed to be playing a role in empowering the underclass in a public and brazen fashion, complete with shouting, shaking and bell-ringing. Their distinctive dress was also seen as evidence of resistance and provocation. This example of creedism cannot be attributed directly to prejudices about beliefs and rituals, though they existed, but to larger issues showing that the British were not 'comfortable' with the public displays of worship (even on street corners) of this group, who largely comprised poor African people without power in the system. However bizarre the beliefs and practices seemed to British authorities, they would not have sought to ban the religion unless they felt threatened in some way. Creedism in this instance stemmed from the association of religion with race, class and politics.

16.5.4 Nativism

Today all over the world we are witnessing a nativist challenge to traditional authority. Previously marginalised groups – disabled and older persons, women, indigenous peoples – are becoming more vocal and resisting the values and norms in modern life which are tending to minimise what they stand for. Some people believe that nativism today is a reaction or a complement to the process of globalisation which is tending to unify the world under some common values and symbols. The resurgence of religion that is a political factor today – as seen in the increasingly militant stand of Hinduism, Islam, Roman Catholicism and American fundamentalist Christianity – can be explained in relation to nativism, which is essentially protecting and asserting one's identity.

 SUMMARY

Racism, classism and creedism have been discussed in this section as forms of prejudice and discrimination based on ethnicity which result in breaches of social justice. It is easier, however, to identify practices which show racism and classism as ongoing forms of social control which have adversely affected how certain groups experience social and economic equalisation than it is to do this for creedism. It seems that only in the individual personal sphere are members of a religion discriminated against because of their beliefs. At the institutional level, what tends to happen is that religious groups may be discriminated against more because they belong to a particular racial, ethnic or social class group than to specific aspects of creed or dogma.

16.6

Sexual orientation

Many people today are suffering discrimination because of their **sexual orientation**. Homosexuality among

Sexual orientation refers to one's 'mating' preferences.

preferences, often referred to as 'being gay', and persons with these preferences usually see them as an essential attribute of their personal identity. But **bisexuality** and **transgenderism** are also recognised today as different

Bisexuality means equality of preference for men and women as sexual partners, whether the bisexual is a man or a woman.

Transgender people were either born as men and are changed into women, usually by surgical operation, but sometimes using hormonal drugs, or vice versa.

sexual orientations against which there may be prejudice or discrimination. The four categories are often elided under the letters LGBT.

In most liberal western countries sexual orientation is protected by law, and homosexual and lesbian couples are allowed to marry or take up civil partnerships, which have the status of legal contracts. Sexual intimacy in private is not seen as something that the law or society should be concerned with. In most Caribbean countries, however, this is not (or not yet) the case, and there is much prejudice against people whose sexual orientation is different from the mainstream ('straight') heterosexual one. In half of all Caribbean countries lesbianism is prohibited, and in some countries homosexuality in any form is against the law (Mintz, 2013). In Belize a conviction for homosexuality carries a sentence of up to 25 years, although this is not often imposed. Jamaica does not allow homosexuals from abroad to enter the country, under a nineteenth-century law which is still on the statute books.

This homophobia is in contrast to increased tolerance in Latin America over the past 40 years or so (Marshall, 2014). Violent homophobic acts, where homosexuals and others of non-mainstream sexual orientation are subject to assaults carried out simply because of their orientation, are also increasing.

One case that made international headlines in 2014 concerned a Jamaican transgender 16-year-old Jamaican named Dwayne who was murdered after being recognised at a party in female dress. His body was dumped in bushes and his murderers have not been brought to justice. Worse still, for many Jamaicans Dwayne was not the victim of

an unprovoked assault, but had brought about his own death by deceiving the men with whom he danced until he was unmasked by a woman acquaintance (Marshall, 2014). The case attracted the attention of human rights organisations outside Jamaica but was accorded little coverage in the island itself.

On the other hand, there are vocal movements in both the US and the UK among conservative Christians encouraging Jamaica and other Caribbean countries to maintain their traditional stance against legalising LGBT orientations. Many would say, however, that violence against anyone because of who they are, even if their actions are technically illegal, is unacceptable and does not assist the debate. This comment is also relevant to the subject of the next section, police brutality.

16.7

Police brutality

Police brutality is an extreme form of discrimination.

Police brutality is the meting out of violence by police officers in the course of their work.

It was used against Jewish people in the ghettos in Germany and Eastern Europe during the Nazi period in Germany. It was used by colonial police forces against pan-Africanists seeking political independence from colonial rule and trade unionists seeking political representation before that. It has been used by American police forces against peaceful protests during the civil rights campaigns and also against student anti-war demonstrators during the Vietnam War in the 1960s. It has a long and infamous history across the world.

In today's Caribbean, police brutality continues to be a problem for democratic countries across the region. Here are some incidents which have made the headlines in recent years.

- On 23 May 2010 in Tivoli Gardens in Kingston, Jamaica (Fig. 16.2), 73 persons died, most of them civilians, when the police invaded this community in full force, similar to a military operation, entering homes and killing people while searching for 'Dudus', a drug lord who was on the run and wanted by the US authorities.
- In Guyana in 2012 (latest data available) the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) received 14 complaints of unlawful killings and 36 complaints of unnecessary use of violence. At the same time, there were several cases reported in the media of random police brutality (Guyana, 2013).

- In 2013 in Trinidad and Tobago police shot and killed 21 persons up to 1 November and these were reported to the independent PCA (T&T, 2013).

Instances of police brutality are felt particularly by those who are socially excluded, who live in marginalised communities and who are predominantly young males. In addition, the incidence of police brutality tends to be higher in those countries experiencing higher levels of crime than others. For example, in Barbados, Grenada, St Vincent and the Grenadines, St Lucia and Dominica there have been only a few allegations of police brutality.

Police brutality relates only to the use by the police of undue force in carrying out their duties – beating persons in their custody or at random in the streets or in homes as well as denying accused persons food and water and torturing them to obtain confessions. When persons are killed while in police custody or while being pursued and interrogated, this is referred to as *extrajudicial killings*.

It is ironic that a police force is supposed to protect and serve citizens (§6.5) but in some countries the police are feared and reviled. In Jamaica, they are referred to as ‘Babylon’ – a Rastafari term for agents of the state and corrupt officials who entrench social inequities and the interests of big business.

One of the reasons why the police in the Caribbean have evolved into a paramilitary-type force is their close connection to the political leadership. The ruling regime regards the police as a force which they can use to suppress their opponents. The young and marginalised tend to be opposed to the ruling authorities and so they feel the brunt of police brutality. This means that any move towards police reform must be initiated and developed through the very same regimes which are employing the police to clamp down on dissent. Where accountability measures such as a PCA exist, cases still go unresolved for long periods of time. It is clear that bodies such as the Police Service Commission should be truly independent of the political directorate and that the Police Commissioner be accountable to the people and not just to the political bosses.

Police brutality is an issue of social justice because it denies citizens of a certain class and ethnicity their just due. When a community is brutalised by the police they will no longer commit to the norms and values of



Fig. 16.2 Armed police on the streets in Tivoli Gardens, Kingston, Jamaica

the ruling elite and will intensify subversive activities with the intention of bringing down those in power. During this time the backlash is felt by ordinary citizens as violence and fear reach into all sectors of society and productive activity is reduced, sometimes to a standstill. One recommendation which can impact favourably on social justice is to decentralise power in the police service into more accountable structures which serve independent of political interference.

16.8

How social injustice affects development

Four different indicators of development are affected by breaches of social justice (see also Chapter 9):

- levels of social inequality (as measured by the Gini index, §9.2.3);
- productivity levels in all sectors, measured in terms of labour productivity, capital productivity and value added measurements;
- quality of life (Box 9.3);
- democratic rights (Box 16.10).

◆ Write down at least one way in which each of the indicators listed above might be affected by social injustice.

BOX 16.10 The democracy index

The democracy index analyses the political systems of countries across the world in order to assess the level of democracy each enjoys. It is produced by the Intelligence Unit at *The Economist* in the form of an annual report. There are five criteria: electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, the functioning of government, political participation and political culture; and four categories: full democracies, flawed democracies, hybrid regimes and authoritarian regimes (*Huffington Post*, 2014). As you can see from the map in Fig. 16.3, countries of the Caribbean region range across all the index categories. From 2011 to 2012 the Middle East region showed most change, with a number of countries moving from authoritarian to hybrid regimes.

Fig. 16.3 World democracy index 2012

**16.8.1 Ageism**

Age discrimination is a form of social injustice and affects the development of Caribbean countries. For example, ageism perpetuates the 'generation gap' and reduces the possibility of healthy, mutually respectful relations between the generations. The older generation has much to contribute in homes, workplaces and public life based on their accumulated knowledge, experience and wisdom. In effect, though, the majority are sidelined, made to retire and not seem as a resource to tap. What compounds this problem is that older persons tend to take on and accept as real the prejudices which mainstream society has about them. They begin to behave like spectators to life, acting out a self-fulfilling prophecy. On the other hand, if they resist these stereotypes they may come into conflict with their own families, those who 'take care' of them.

For a whole group of people in the society to feel unfulfilled and marginalised means that in such a society equity and productivity, as well as the sustainability of the development effort, is thwarted. It is not only a question of economic productivity being diminished because society does not want their labour; ageist practices entrench unfairness, and this can easily be extended to other groups with 'minority' status – women, ethnic groups such as Rastafarians and the poor. Over time, social injustice encourages the rise of resistance and conflict as groups suffering inequities begin to seek

ways of living which actualise their potential. In the Caribbean, older people do not yet constitute a political force, but in countries such as the US the Gray Panthers are a watchdog association determined to make a fuss and bring legal action against those dealing unfairly with older persons. Similarly, the Association of Retired Persons is a powerful lobby advocating better medical, insurance and care options for older people.

The concept of development as human development is not being advanced in societies where there are entrenched inequities. Human development requires that people are put at centre stage for the development effort and that development means broadening choices and options for everyone. Ageist attitudes, however, seem to be narrowing the choices of older people and forcing them into a path of literally preparing to die. Inevitably, though, as more people enter these age groups, resistant actions will begin and the society will have to deal with conflict as this minority group makes a bid to change several entrenched social customs and practices. In fact, in the English-speaking Caribbean, as in Europe, North America and Japan, the numbers in the older age groups are increasing rapidly. It is predicted that by 2025 the oldest old will make up as much as 8 per cent of the population. Cuba and Barbados are leading this demographic trend (Box 16.11). Tomorrow's older persons are less likely to conform to ageist stereotypes, perhaps because more of them will have benefited from

BOX 16.11

around 28 in 2005, but predictions suggest that it will rise steeply by 2020. The map below shows how this is broken down by country.



Fig. 16.4 Ageing trends across the Caribbean region

education and more of them, being women, will have benefited from increasingly equitable opportunities in adult life. And, not unimportantly, they will represent a large constituency which politicians will want to capture. However, they will also be pitted against those groups who feel that social justice means distributing resources equally and that older people are already receiving more than adequate resources while many younger groups (for example, children) are living in poverty. The stage is thus set for increased conflict in social life.

16.8.2 Sexual Discrimination

Sidelining and marginalising women through sexist prejudices and stereotypes, as well as through acts of sexual discrimination, have far-reaching effects for

Caribbean societies. Each case of sexism, whether it is in the job market or a case of rape, is an example of social injustice and a human rights issue. In addition, by implicating women, sexism also involves others closely dependent on women – children and older people. Thus, when women are treated as the ‘second sex’ and suffer injustices, these are also passed on to others, and in the case of children affect the future generation. For example, denying women equal pay for equal work and restricting women’s access to the higher-paying jobs means that whole families are affected, because in the Caribbean female-headed households are prevalent. Many young single mothers are employed in services and lowly paid work. This captive group of women is thus being exploited by sexist labour market practices, with the result that they cannot climb out of poverty. Levels

of social and economic equalisation, one of the indicators of development, would be even more difficult to achieve because of this breach of social justice.

The incidence of sexual harassment, sexual violence, spousal abuse and child abuse in homes is likely to adversely affect generations of Caribbean people. Psychological research shows consistently that victims of child abuse usually grow up to be aggressive and are likely to be abusers themselves. Those who have not been abused but who observe their mothers and other relatives being violently abused are likely to grow up with problems of relating meaningfully to others. As adults, these persons know few other strategies to cope with conflict or frustration. The high levels of violence in Caribbean societies are likely to continue to increase if family violence is not addressed as a national and regional issue. This is hardly raised in present-day discussions about fighting crime and yet the quality of life for all citizens would be severely compromised, subverting development goals, if this situation is not addressed.

Whether women are being sexually discriminated against in the labour market or whether they are being abused at home, there are economic costs for the country. Abused women and children cannot be productive workers or students. A mother who works infrequently because of abuse will earn less, impacting negatively on the health and well-being of herself and her family. Her buying power will also be reduced and thus her contribution to economic life. Additionally, the enormous investments which Caribbean governments are making in education can to a great extent be nullified if children are apathetic, hungry and living in fear. Thus, breaches of social justice through employment discrimination or domestic abuse negatively affect the development of a country by reducing productivity and reducing the capacity of citizens to take advantage of opportunities.

Domestic violence is also expensive for the government, including the tremendous costs associated with hospital and rehabilitative care and therapy and counselling for survivors of domestic abuse. If one calculates the impact on ill health of domestic violence, the results are sobering, and they are ongoing.

Buvinic and Morrison (1999) found the annual cost of GBV (gender-based violence) alone accounted for a loss of 2 per cent of GDP in Chile and 1.6 per cent of GDP in Nicaragua. In 2003 Colombia spent close to 0.6 per cent of GNP, or US\$73.3 million, to prevent, detect

and provide services to survivors of GBV, according to the World Bank. In addition, more and more resources are being directed towards: efforts to prevent abuse; planning and carrying out intervention programmes for abusers and victims; devising better laws to address the problems of victims and at the same time make the perpetrators accountable; and providing the police with specialised units to deal with sexual violence and sexual crimes.

16.8.3 Racism and Classism

Ultimately, discriminatory education and employment policies adversely affect development in Caribbean countries because a socially stratified society is maintained, with little prospect of bringing about social and economic equalisation. Groups which are victims of racial and social class discrimination in the labour market eventually become an underclass, turning to crime, drugs and prostitution; for some, extreme poverty and homelessness result. In time the entire society becomes victim to a spiralling crime rate and the quality of life deteriorates for all. Institutional discrimination, then, based on racism and classism, sabotages efforts towards social justice and subverts the development process.



Wrap Up

In this chapter we have examined the concept of social justice according to the competing concepts of natural or human rights, welfare or need and merit and mutual advantage. These three criteria have been used to assess the extent to which equality and fairness occur in Caribbean society among different groups. The groups studied belong to different categories of age, sex, race, social class and religion. In each case levels of social inequality show that the development needs of the region have been threatened by unfair practices based on prejudices, stereotypes and discrimination. In many cases we have been able to see that discrimination against a group of people led to a situation where they became marginalised – with little chance of acquiring social and economic parity, and suffering loss of productivity and a decrease in the quality of their lives.

Research TOPICS

An interesting investigation of issues of social justice can be constructed around the prejudices, stereotypes and acts of discrimination relating to ageism. A number of older persons can be interviewed about their experiences of growing older and how others have related to them. The questions could be divided into areas such as work, home and family life and socialising. The researcher could also draw conclusions about whether the respondent agrees with the stereotypes about older persons or whether there has been a spirit of resistance.

Alternatively, the study could be constructed around younger persons who are asked questions about growing old, their attitudes to mandatory retirement at 65 years and to the prospect of older persons playing a more active role in social life (for example, entering politics, starting new careers and forming social clubs, even marching and demonstrating against forms of social injustice). However, the researcher must phrase the questions in such a way that the respondent is not tempted to only say what may be politically correct. For example:

- 'At what age would you like to retire? Why? What do you think of the mandatory retirement age in force right now?'
- 'Do you think that once people retire they tend to get sick and die?'
- 'Most people have a horror of growing old, why do you think that is so?'
- 'There seems to be a tendency in the society to think negative things about old people. Why do you think that this is so?'

These questions are not directly on target but try to get the respondent to focus on the issues in a personal way which is likely to yield genuine attitudes and beliefs. This strategy tends to be used in researching topics where the respondent is not likely to have thought about the issue in depth before, and so there could be a tendency to adopt whatever cues they may be getting from the interviewer.

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Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Explain the meaning of 'prejudice' and 'stereotypes' using an example of each. (2 marks)
- 2 (b) State TWO ways in which prejudices and stereotypes are related to discrimination. (4 marks)
- 3 (a) Write a sentence defining the term 'social justice'. (2 marks)
- (b) Describe TWO examples of the way discrimination impacts on social justice. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) Distinguish between equity and equality. (2 marks)
- (b) Describe TWO ways in which equity in a society could be threatened by trying to achieve equality. (4 marks)
- 5 (a) What is meant by a 'social contract'? (2 marks)
- (b) Explain how the idea of a social contract works in TWO different ways to ensure social justice for citizens. (4 marks)
- 6 (a) Explain what is meant by 'classism'. (2 marks)
- (b) Using TWO examples from Caribbean social life, show how classism impacts on social justice. (4 marks)
- 7 (a) Distinguish between misogyny and misandry. (2 marks)
- (b) State ONE way in which misogyny affects relationships between men and women, and ONE way in which it affects relationships between men. (4 marks)
- 8 (a) Identify TWO indicators which are affected by social injustice. (2 marks)
- (b) For ONE of these, state TWO effects which can be observed. (4 marks)

Essay questions

(20 marks)

- 1 Discuss how social justice can be conceptualised according to (a) natural or human rights, (b) welfare and (c) mutual advantage.
- 2 Using examples, explain why prejudice and stereotypes persist in how mainstream society relates to different ethnic groups in the Caribbean.
- 3 Describe how poverty leads to social injustice.
- 4 'The aged represent a minority group in Caribbean society.' Present arguments for and against this statement.

Challenge essay questions (30 marks)

- 1 Assess the argument that sexist practices stem largely from gender socialisation of males and females in the Caribbean.
- 2 Why do feminists prefer to categorise incidents of sexual harassment as acts of violence against women rather than as examples of discrimination?
- 3 Discuss the view that racism tends to occur in the Caribbean in combination with classism.
- 4 To what extent are stereotypes necessary in how people understand and negotiate the world? Use examples drawn from Caribbean society and culture.

MODULE

3

Investigating Issues in the Caribbean

The act of conducting research involves rethinking and reassessing traditional ideas and stereotypical knowledge. It is a search for the 'truth' or deeper understanding. As a result it falls within those critical thinking skills which all persons should master, particularly young people, who are being called upon to 'change the world'. A commitment to research and a good grasp of what research involves helps today's students to develop a critical and analytical stance about all knowledge. Caribbean societies need this sort of commitment, as historically it has been a region where ethnocentric ideas have been imposed and where local theorising and local knowledge have been downplayed.

In this module, the foundations of good research are described. The module emphasises that the most important aspect of research is the problem itself, and all decisions (whether relating to the approach or to the methods to be used) must be appropriate to the problem.

MODULE OBJECTIVES



On completing this module, you will be able to:

1. conceptualise an inquiry into a research problem;
2. appreciate the difference between quantitative and qualitative research;
3. develop a working knowledge of how to conduct systematic research;
4. appreciate the ethical issues and dilemmas involved in systematic research.

17

Research: Nature, Purpose and Objectives



Research being carried out in a rural area

This chapter introduces you to the nature, purpose and objectives of well thought-out research, whether you are focusing on wide-ranging historical and geographical issues for humanities research or on the social science speciality, social issues and problems.

Much of the research you will do at this level will be likely to be social science research. A ‘social’ issue or problem may refer to almost any aspect of life in society – economic, religious, family, gender, crime, health, education, and so on. Research or investigations into social life where human beings are involved differ substantially from laboratory research in the natural or physical sciences on animals, plants, human tissue and inorganic materials, where the emphasis is on conducting experiments, and also from humanities research focusing on, for example, historical documents and archives, the ideas of theorists or the comparison of economic statistics. However, even within the social sciences, there are competing assumptions about what is ‘good’ research. For such inquiry the goal is not just to increase knowledge but to increase it in a way that people can use to improve their lives. In other words, the goal is human development.

It should be emphasised at the outset that all research must follow ethical guidelines so that no harm or disrespect is done to persons and the inquiry itself is conducted in a trustworthy manner. This aspect of research is considered in detail in Chapter 20.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. understand that the nature and purpose of research varies with the assumptions of the researcher;
2. state the different forms of knowledge which are recognised in research;
3. appreciate how to make research both reliable and valid;
4. understand the nature of problem-solving in research;
5. identify a research issue or problem which affects human development.

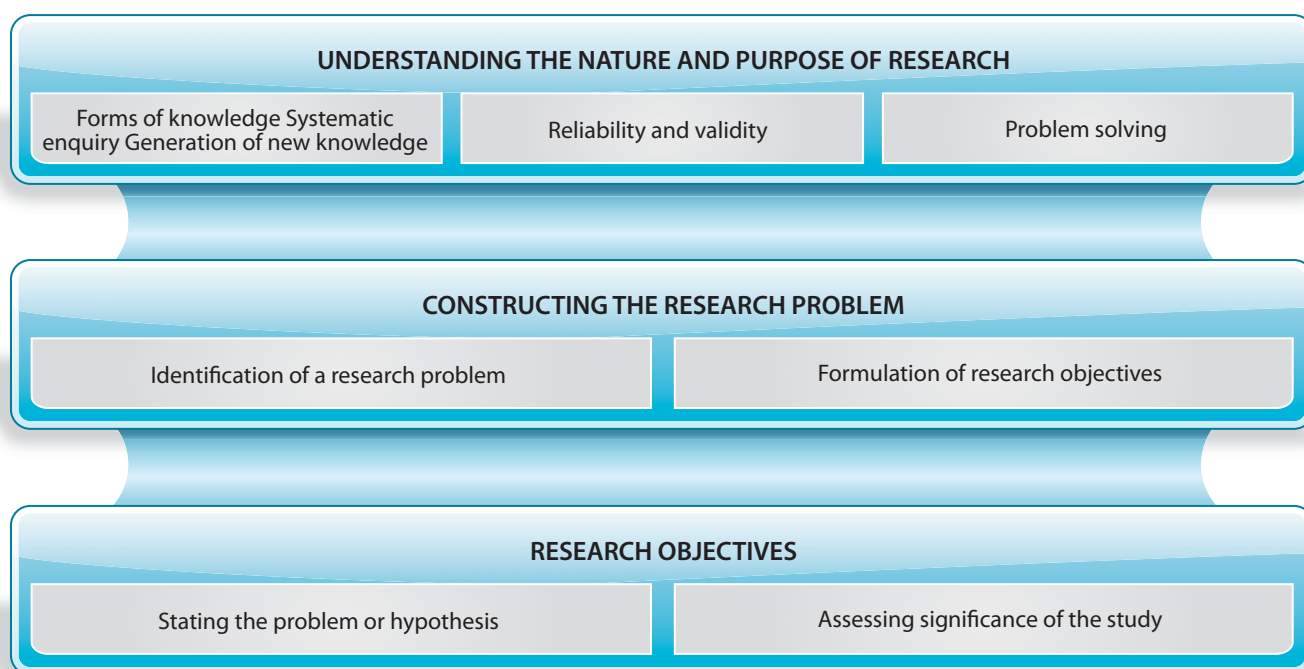


Fig. 17.1 Flowchart showing how a research project begins

17.1

What is research?

All scholars carry out research. It is an essential part of their work, even if they are also teachers, lecturers or writers. At both CAPE and CSEC level, CXC examinations require a research element. In the social sciences, research will be carried out on current issues, using what are known as quantitative and qualitative research methods (see Chapter 18) which are frequently

used in social science research. However, as Caribbean Studies is an interdisciplinary subject, there may be geographical or historical elements to your research (see Box 17.2, page 409).

17.1.1 Forms of Knowledge

Academic knowledge tends to be classified into three main groups:

- the *humanities*, generally covering history, literature and philosophy;

- *social sciences*, which include sociology, political science and economics;
- the *natural sciences*, traditionally biology, chemistry and physics.

Some disciplines overlap, such as anthropology and psychology (social science and natural science), archaeology (natural science and humanities) and geography (which straddles all three).

The first type of academic research carried out was in the natural sciences, and this has influenced the way we think about knowledge (see Box 17.1). However, two other important forms of knowledge affect our everyday life. These are *tradition* and *experience*.

- Tradition is built up in a community such as a village, a school, a church or denomination, a uniformed group, a family or even a nation (in the form of customs and norms). Children are socialised into these traditions as they grow up and, at least until they become young adults, are guided and governed by what they have been taught.
- Experience is another powerful agent of socialisation. When we experience something, we learn from it. For example, if we are punished as children for a particular act of wrongdoing, we are usually careful to avoid that wrongdoing in the future – or at least avoid being detected in it! Many traditional types of work such as craft, farming, fishing and cuisine are based heavily on experience.

These forms of knowledge are essential to the way we learn at school and in our families and communities, but they are not a good basis for academic research, where one of the main purposes is the generation of new knowledge. Not infrequently such research also involves the questioning of tradition and raises the possibility that innovation rather than experience may be a good guide for further development.

Scholars of the different types of academic discipline often choose different research methods, though these are related. For example, research in the humanities requires the ability to use documentary sources, perhaps exclusively, whereas social science research will tend to range much more widely and involve direct contact with living human beings. Scientific research may require a very great deal of accurate measurement and observation, usually of non-human subjects (see also Box 17.3). It may have to be conducted in conditions that minimise contamination of the subject matter by the everyday conditions which are quite acceptable or even irrelevant for social science and humanities research.

17.2

Social science research

Much of the research you will carry out for Caribbean Studies will be social science research. Social scientists conduct research in different ways, and some of these methods overlap with the type of research carried out in the humanities and natural sciences (Boxes 17.2 and 17.3). We have looked at the nature and purpose of research mainly through a social sciences lens in this chapter, but the principles are the same for all types of research, that it should:

- be systematic;
- generate new knowledge about particular issues;
- show evidence of reliability and validity;
- solve or throw new light on research problems which have been identified.

You yourself have done ‘research’ informally in everyday life and for school projects, and for the ‘Research Mini projects’ earlier in this book. Cast your mind back to any time you wanted to find out information about someone or some event or issue. What methods of inquiry did you use? Did you ask someone whom you thought knew more about the person or issue than you did? That could be thought of as interviewing an expert! Did you decide to make the observations yourself? Then you needed to have some information to know when and where to station yourself and you had to make decisions about whether you wanted the ‘subjects’ to see you or not.

Research, then, may be conducted obtrusively or unobtrusively. Members of your family might at some time be engaged in research about what to do and where to go for an upcoming holiday, or where and what model of appliance to buy, which mutual funds to invest in and sometimes, if moving house, which neighbourhood is more suitable. Research in the library for a school project might involve reading documents. These are all everyday examples of ‘research’.

However, research where the outcomes are about improving human development must be attempted in more systematic ways than those used in informal research efforts. If you have ever met people inside a supermarket asking your opinions of a certain product you probably realised that they were conducting some form of research. In this case it would be called *market research* and they were trying to find out (that is, collect information) from different people about how they assess a particular product (what are their experiences and thoughts having used the product).

BOX 17.1

Empirical knowledge

Scientific research generally relies on **empirical knowledge**. Our senses are fundamental to this type

Empirical knowledge is a way of knowing which, it is claimed, gives rise to true and valid knowledge.

of knowledge, which explains its alternative name, *sensory knowledge* or data. Hearing, touch, taste, sight and smell tells us that something is real. We experience it and we have empirical evidence of it. Empirical knowledge has nothing to do with dreams, intuition, emotion or imagination, and these are not accepted by scientists as sources of valid knowledge, because they are not experienced by everyone in the same way and cannot be double-checked. Thus, empirical knowledge, and research using empirical data, came to characterise the 'scientific method' (see Fig. 17.2 below and Box 17.3).

The scientific method describes the norms and guidelines which natural and physical scientists follow in conducting research to produce new knowledge. It is a logical process developed from careful experimentation, observation and analysis of regularly repeated occurrences of a phenomenon (e.g. osmosis) so that a truthful generalisation can be revealed about such a phenomenon. Thus, osmosis tends to occur in the same way over and over again whenever certain conditions prevail.

Knowledge which is produced by the scientific method to explain and predict the natural and physical world tends to be regarded as certain, uncontested, and therefore 'truth'. 'Certainty' here refers to knowledge which is permanent, in that it will not change.

These beliefs about the certainty of scientific knowledge are strongly held by many people to the point where science is regarded as factual knowledge. This view, though, is only a social construction – a way people have of giving meaning to something and then coming to believe in it. For example, groups of people over time have rendered this 'opinion' of the knowledge produced by natural and physical scientists because they had utter faith in the use of empirical or sensory data (phenomena which can be seen, touched, tasted, heard and smelt), and the rigorous process of experimentation involved.

The emphasis on tangible realities (that is, sensory data) affirmed people's belief that knowledge produced in this way was certain and factual. These social constructions can be easily unmasked when we study the history of science and learn of the many 'truths' which have been disproved over time as investigations became more sensitive to alternative approaches, and especially to anomalies – phenomena which could not be explained by existing theories.

An **observation** which you find intriguing and would like to investigate further. It usually involves a relationship between two variables.

A **hypothesis** is put forward to be tested. It states the relationship which the researcher feels exists between the variables.

Data collection – Observations and experiments are conducted on the variables to try to establish the correct relationship between them.

Data analysis – All the findings are studied to determine significant trends and relationships.

Conclusions – May verify or reject the initial hypothesis. A theory may be offered to explain the phenomena observed which would be able to predict similar relationships in the future. This is called a natural law or a generalisation.

Fig. 17.2 Steps in empirical research

BOX 17.2**Historical investigations****Sources**

Unlike social science studies, most historical investigations use print or archive documentary sources. These are divided into **primary** and **secondary sources**. Primary sources give you the

Primary sources are printed or archive materials such as letters, memoirs or diaries.

Secondary sources are books, articles and other writings based on the primary sources and including comment, analysis or interpretation.

opportunity to get close to the original event, person or group that you are researching. On the other hand, secondary sources give you the benefit of other researchers' and commentators' ideas, knowledge and interpretation.

If you are studying a recent period of history, you may also use non-textual sources such as oral history – this may include formalised archived recordings or taped conversations you have had with older persons in the community. Ancient history investigations may involve archaeological artefacts or inhabitation sites. Film and TV may also be useful, mainly as secondary sources, although archive film constitutes a primary source – of a riot or revolt, a particular ceremony or festival, or the realities of social life in the early twentieth century, for example.

Literary review

As with social science, an important aspect of historical research is to survey what has already been written about the subject you are planning to investigate. This will not only help to steer your

project in a suitable direction, where not too much original work has already been done, but it will also protect you from the problem of overlapping studies, where accidental plagiarism (see Chapter 20) can occur.

Data collection

Where social science research involves surveys, interviews and statistical analysis, historical investigations are more likely to involve a lot of reading, unless you are covering very recent events or phenomena. Your sources may well be in a library or archive, and if you have a good library in your country or territory it is worth trying to access it, even if it means a special journey. But as a school student it may well be easier to access your sources online, as vast quantities of written and archive material are available digitally. Try to decide what the sources are that you are looking for, so that you can go to specific websites rather than spending time on general Internet searches. Search engines do a good job, but too general a search term will tend to provide you with a lot of useless (or even misleading) websites – and this is just as true of social science Internet research as it is of historical research.

Data analysis and presentation

Once you have made your study, using primary and secondary source materials, the analysis and presentation of the data is similar to that used for social science research (see Chapters 18 and 19). As with social science research, you can use many different kinds of presentation, not only text. Be careful to assess the sources for bias, and try to base your conclusions on as many different sources as possible, both primary and secondary (Chapter 20).

Thus, social science research is about:

1. finding out some information (not just any information but specific questions you want answered);
2. selecting a group of people from whom to find out the information (it is important who you choose and how you choose them) or using documentary sources;
3. maintaining an ethical stance in collecting, analysing and reporting the information (see Chapter 20).

While these three characteristics answer the question 'What is research?', it is important to realise that different researchers will carry out their inquiries in different ways (see §17.4).

It may seem obvious, but the market researchers already mentioned made decisions about where and when to carry out their study. They did not stop people on the street, nor did they go to a toy store. They chose a supermarket where the product was sold. To get maximum responses they probably chose a time when the supermarket would be full of people, because not everyone would be using the product or even know about it. If the product was baby's milk they probably made a decision to be stereotypical in their thinking and chose to ask only women who seemed to be of a certain age. They would be friendly and courteous and engage the

customer in a quick discussion about the product, using the same list of questions for every person questioned. Using this strategy, the researchers would have felt (a) that they would get relevant information by (b) identifying members of the 'target population' who used the product and (c) that they would get the information without hindering shoppers, or being a nuisance, or asking questions of an unduly personal nature (in other words, they conducted the research in an ethical manner).

ACTIVITY 17.1

Answer the following questions based on the example of market research discussed above.

1. If the researchers wanted to find out about light bulbs, what decisions might they make about whom to choose as participants in the research?
2. Suppose the researchers wanted to expand their study and try different supermarkets, to get the opinions of a larger cross section of people, should they change their approach in any way? Explain your answer.
3. In what ways can these studies be considered relevant to human development?

17.2.1 Reliability

Research is often described as 'systematic inquiry which is valid and reliable'. The market researchers had a *systematic approach* in that they had a ready set of questions (known as the interview protocol) which did not vary as they interacted with different consumers, who were chosen according to certain criteria. Great efforts were probably made to ensure that the instrument used, was reliable. 'Reliability' in research refers to the degree to which an instrument is interpreted in the same way by all the subjects being interviewed. In other words, the questions asked and the terms used should not be ambiguous or have multiple meanings. In some contexts, for example, the mothers may interpret the term 'formula' correctly whereas in other cases they may be more familiar with 'making tea for the baby' or 'making a bottle for the baby'. The reliability of an instrument therefore depends on the consistency with which the questions are interpreted in a variety of places and over time.

17.2.2 Validity

Systematic inquiry must also be valid. Research is 'valid' when the questions asked and the methods used are likely to produce relevant answers to the questions posed by the researcher. The questions must be about what is being studied. While this may seem rather obvious, it is

quite easy for a researcher to investigate issues which are only tangential to the research study. In the case of baby milk, the researchers are likely to inquire about whether the availability, size and nutritive value of the product are acceptable, whether the baby seemed to like the product, if there were any allergic or other reactions and how it rates against similar brands. They are interested in the consumers' assessment of the product. Questions which are *not* likely to add to the validity of the study, and which would have been better avoided, would include:

- 'How often do you come to this supermarket?' (The women may visit the supermarket but not necessarily buy baby milk on every occasion. They may also visit other supermarkets.)
- 'Will you continue to buy this product?' (While this may seem to be directly on target, the likelihood is that people may just say 'yes' because if they say 'no' they think they will have to give a reason and then the market researcher may reply and they will get caught up in a dialogue which they don't need when shopping.)
- 'Is the price acceptable?' (Now market analysts have a good sense of what other similar products cost and make strategic decisions about competitive pricing. They cannot rely too much on what consumers say in this regard because they know the majority would always say that it could be cheaper. Such a question would not contribute any significant knowledge to the research.)

Questions which only focus on the consumers' assessment of the product would make for a valid research instrument, whether as a questionnaire or an interview protocol. (Both questionnaires and interview protocols are instruments which measure responses.) Validity, then, is a characteristic of research which says that the data collected should be faithful to what the researchers are interested in finding out. If questions are used that yield data which are superficial, unhelpful (for example, if the questions listed above were used) and off target, then the research will have serious problems of validity.

17.2.3 Significance

The significance of a study is sometimes called its *rationale*. It is the reason why the study is undertaken – apart, that is, from the intrinsic interest felt by the researcher in the topic being researched. All original research must have some significance, whether it is to identify further issues in an area already studied, or to highlight some new issue that no one has thought about before and that needs to be addressed. Significance is of particular importance in the social sciences because of their currency – their preoccupation with current problems and issues, even if those are rooted in history. A social science researcher does

not select a research topic only because of intrinsic interest or the availability of sources, but because it has relevance or significance for the society she or he is studying.

The nature of research, then, is that it must be systematic and employ procedures which ensure reliability and validity. This is because research aims to find out information and this information could be wrong or misleading if the procedures used are not carefully thought out. So, when someone says they are going to the library to 'research a topic' this is just a popular way in which the term is used. That person is indeed going to find out something about some topic, but the skills they need tend to be only the ability to read, comprehend and analyse the material. On the other hand, conceptualising a research project in a systematic way involves:

- identifying a problem which impacts on human development;
- formulating research questions or hypotheses by devising a set of questions or concerns which focus on what the researchers want to be informed about;

- conducting a literature review to inform themselves about as many aspects of the topic as possible, usually by reading books, journal articles and newspapers;
- choosing a suitable data collection strategy (or strategies) in relation to their concerns;
- analysing the data collected using their original questions, concerns or concepts as a guide;
- interpreting what they have found and considering the possible implications.

This way of conceptualising the research process is popular among researchers and represents one conception of how research could be conducted. Fig. 17.3 shows this process diagrammatically. However, it must be remembered that research can be conceived differently, depending on what the researcher wants to find out. Other ways of conceptualising research will have different ways of ensuring that the process is systematic, and therefore reliability and validity will have different meanings (see §17.4).

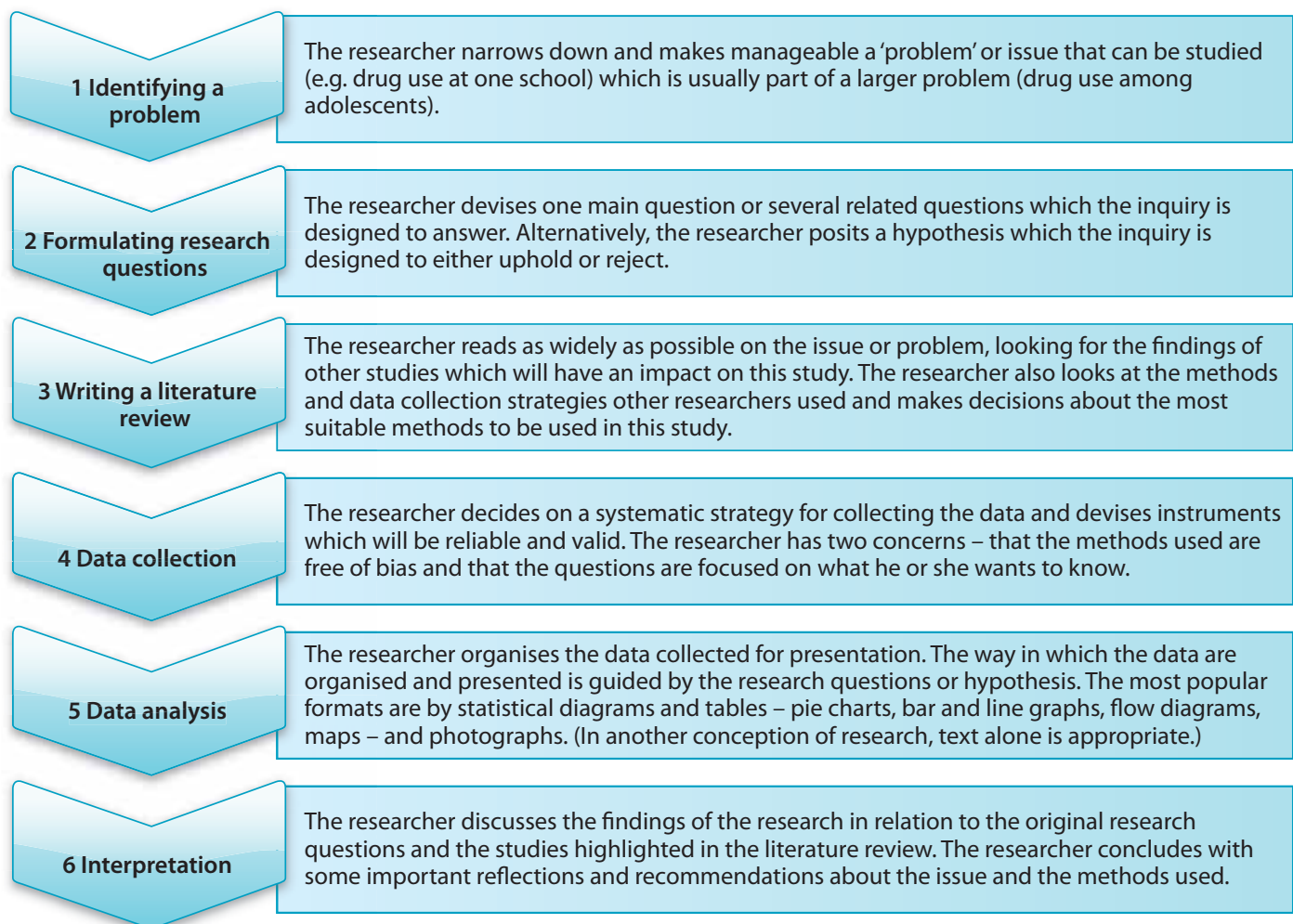


Fig. 17.3 The conventional idea about research: stages in the research process

17.3

Why conduct research?

Whatever the conception of research, the reason why research is conducted is to gather information about some phenomenon. However, the reasons why this information is needed tend to vary. These reasons point to the purposes of the research. In the conception of research typical of the format in Fig. 17.3, the reasons or purposes why research is conducted tend to be one or more of the following:

1. to generate new knowledge;
2. to solve a problem;
3. to be able to predict an event or outcome
4. to test a theory.

◆ Which of the reasons listed here (there can be more than one) do you think were important in conducting the market research described in the section above?

Let us consider the research project suggested at the end of Chapter 1. There it was suggested that any form of the mass media could be selected in order to describe and analyse how it presented 'the Caribbean'. Of the four reasons given above, the most likely reason to have prompted this study would be the desire to test a theory we already have about the issue. This is the purpose of this research project. It may be that we felt that Caribbean countries were marginal to the 'news', that some countries were repeatedly ignored and that some were only represented when violence and mayhem occurred. We could survey the news, for example, only in newspapers, over a period (a week, a month) and collect data which would throw some light on our theory. However, there are some ways in which research is conceptualised where the reasons for conducting the inquiry vary considerably from the four reasons listed above.

ACTIVITY 17.2

Imagine you were conducting a study about 'religion and family values' as a significant and important issue in Caribbean society and culture, and you asked people their opinion on how religion impacts on family values now as opposed to years ago.

1. Of the four reasons for conducting research listed above, which one(s) do you believe are appropriate in this case of 'religion and family values'?
2. If none of the four seems appropriate enough, suggest other reasons why people may undertake research of this kind.

In Activity 17.2 the researchers are primarily interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the link between religion and family life. They are less likely to be testing a theory or generating new knowledge. In fact, the four reasons for conducting research listed above tend to be typical of mainstream research conducted according to the scientific method. The study on religion and family values represents an alternative conception of research, where the purpose of the research is usually to seek deeper understanding of some complex phenomenon where there are no straightforward answers.

17.4

Conceptions of research

There are three major views or perspectives about research. The conception of research portrayed in Fig. 17.3 and the description of market research above illustrate what is called the *mainstream perspective*. But a problem arises when people begin to believe that is the only way that research should be undertaken. The conception of research chosen must necessarily relate to exactly what the researcher wants to find out. In the following pages we describe three of the major ways in which research can be conceptualised.

17.4.1

Mainstream Ideas About Research

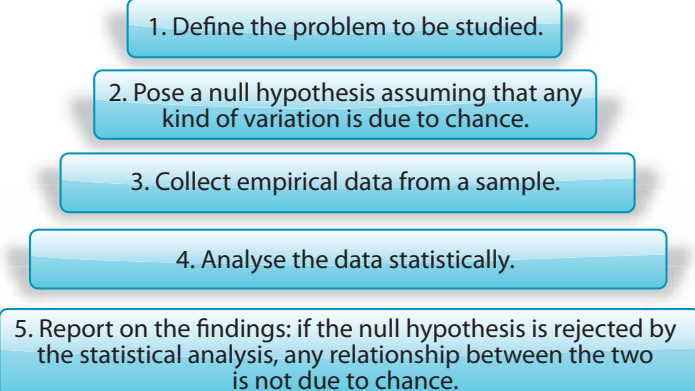
Conventional ideas about research are based on the scientific method (see Box 17.3, which describes how scientists conduct inquiries in the natural or physical sciences). The knowledge generated by research in the natural sciences is regarded as somehow more 'solid' than knowledge in the social sciences because it has been produced by the scientific method. Many social scientists respect the scientific method and have attempted to study social life using similar principles. As a result, in mainstream social science research investigators try in many ways to preserve 'objectivity', to reduce 'bias' and to conduct the research process in a linear way, moving through one step at a time.

One way researchers do this is to use the same questions for all respondents and take care not to become familiar with the 'subjects' (those interviewed or participating in the research). Because they assume reality lies outside a person (a fundamental tenet of science), they try to keep their feelings and emotions (as well as that of the subject) out of the research and stick to facts which can be verified. For example, the data they collect are empirical (collected in the field) and thus of a sensory nature (they can be seen, felt, tasted, smelt and/or heard). The aim of research in the natural and physical sciences is

BOX 17.3 The scientific method

Historically, the 'scientific method' was associated with the natural sciences and how new scientific information is discovered (Box 17.1). This method is based on particular understanding of reality meaning that what is real can only be discovered through observation and measurement, i.e. through the collection and analysis of empirical data. The steps of the scientific method are shown in Fig. 17.4.

Fig. 17.4 The steps of the 'scientific method'



to study many instances of a phenomenon (for example, sickle cell anaemia in different parts of the world) so that researchers can generalise their findings to the entire population (all sickle cell anaemia patients). Thus, in this conception of research in the social sciences, there is an emphasis on studying many persons in an attempt to generalise findings. A sample must be chosen which is 'representative' of the entire population for whom a generalisation will be made. A lot of thought therefore goes into choosing an appropriate sample. Since the research involves large numbers of persons, the data generated usually have to be statistically analysed and presented in the form of graphs and tables, giving rise to the term *quantitative research*.

Box 17.4 (page 415) presents a brief description of an actual study conceived in this way. One characteristic of this form of research in the social sciences is that the researcher is seen as an expert who comes from outside the context to study a problem or phenomenon. The people at the site or sites are questioned, observed and/or interviewed, documents are analysed and statistics collected. However, the researchers stick closely to their questionnaires and interview protocols (their instruments) and do not deviate. Neither do they become friendly with any of the 'subjects' lest they introduce bias into the study and jeopardise its objectivity; they feel that the 'insider' information these informants have might be biased and be based on their own value positions.

This conception of research ignores the psychological world of the people at the site. The language used tries to keep distance between the researcher and the researched. They are referred to as 'subjects', indicating that they are passive sources of information. Ethics in this form of research are aimed at preserving a value-free or

ACTIVITY 17.3

Read about the study described in Box 17.4 and answer the following questions.

1. Identify ways in which this study was influenced by the scientific method (Boxes 17.1 and 17.3).
2. How did the researchers try to reduce bias in the study?
3. Why did the researchers expect their findings to be generalisable to all schools in St Jude even though they had only received questionnaires from 100 students in each school?

objective set of conditions, similar to how a scientist in a laboratory studies microbes. The researchers, though, are careful to approach the subjects in a respectful manner. While it is the most widely acceptable form of research today, its usefulness in addressing the problems of human development has been seriously challenged by other conceptions of research.

17.4.2 Alternative Ideas About Research

Box 17.5 (page 415) presents a study on school indiscipline conceptualised according to ideas about research which do not regard the researcher as an expert in the context being studied and sees a more active role for the 'subjects', who are now called 'participants'. Their argument is that all research is about knowledge production and researchers have to regard the people at the site as having valid and 'insider' knowledge of the phenomenon being studied. Tapping into and using their knowledge base will help to make the research a more useful undertaking than one where the researcher keeps the researched at arm's length. In this conception of research the researcher acknowledges

BOX 17.4**Case study: A mainstream research project**

The aim of this study was to investigate the nature and causes of school indiscipline and violence in St Jude parish in a Caribbean country. The school system was plagued with differing levels of indiscipline and lawlessness, and St Jude, being the parish with the highest population densities, the largest number of schools and an increasing incidence of violence and serious breaches of the school rules, was singled out for the study. There were ten secondary schools in St Jude and one researcher was sent to each school to collect data. The research team had discussed the problem beforehand and created a hypothesis which they expected the inquiry to uphold or reject:

Students coming from low-income families or families experiencing major problems are more likely to be involved in indiscipline.

They next created a questionnaire which they were going to use at all ten sites. It was pilot tested on a small number of students before the investigation began to assess its reliability and validity. This instrument was to be administered to students and they were asked to be as truthful as possible since it was anonymous. The questionnaire had 20 questions, of the forced-choice type, for example:

11 How often in the past month were you a victim of bullying?

(a) 0–5 times (b) 6–10 times (c) 11–15 times
(d) 16–20 times

12 How often have you been involved in fights in school?

(a) 0–5 times (b) 6–10 times
(c) 11–15 times (d) 16–20 times

13 How often have your parents/guardians been called in because you were involved in a violent incident?

(a) 0–5 times (b) 6–10 times (c) 11–15 times
(d) 16–20 times

Since each school had about 1000 or more students, that would have generated about 10 000 questionnaires to be analysed. The researchers therefore had to choose a sample which they expected to be representative of the whole population. From a list of names in each class they used a table of random numbers to select 100 students in each school. They collected what data they could on these students' home situations from the form teachers and guidance officers (though they were bound by confidentiality and could only give general information) and other school records. They estimated the socioeconomic situation of the family from the occupations stated for the breadwinner of the family.

When data collection was complete the researchers had about 1000 questionnaires to analyse. They keyed the data into a computer program for statistical analysis. For example, for question 11 they would just key in 'b' if that is what a student had indicated. The printout would show for question 11 not only how many students had been a victim of bullying but how many times that had occurred in the past month. Data for each question could be represented in tables, pie charts and bar graphs. They could then correlate or match delinquent students with their family data to see if their hypothesis was upheld or rejected. After presenting the data, the researchers would discuss their findings, consider the implications and suggest recommendations.

that he or she has to rely on the people in the context, and on their cultural knowledge and 'know-how', in deciding what kinds of data are important and what may be the best ways of going about data collection. The researcher works with the participants to make sense of the data because he or she understands that how the participants see or experience the problem or issue is important in whether this investigation will be helpful or not.

Such a study is conducted to deepen understanding of a phenomenon and you may have suggested 'understanding' as one of the answers to Activity 17.2. 'Understanding' by itself, though, is seldom advanced as a reason for conducting mainstream research. Mainstream researchers tend to focus on (a) producing

'new knowledge', (b) solving a problem, (c) prediction or (d) testing a theory. This shows the influence of the scientific method on their conception of research. (Box 17.4, for example, describes a study looking for the 'causes' of indiscipline, or at least the factors associated with it – it is a 'why?' study.) Researchers working with an alternative conception of research, however, do not feel that there is any 'new knowledge' to be unearthed about social life. They feel that the people at the site already have the knowledge, which they may hold as beliefs, attitudes, myths, assumptions, ideas, and so on, and it is this knowledge which has to be drawn out and reported. This strategy of data collection results in a large volume of text material and is termed *qualitative research*.

BOX 17.5 Study of violence and lawlessness

The study was an investigation of the incidence of violence and lawlessness in the secondary schools in St. Jude parish. The researchers decided to focus on only two schools and study them in an in-depth way. Their main research question was:

How does indiscipline affect students at School X?

In each school they conducted:

- long conversational interviews with five delinquent students and two law-abiding students, the principal, a dean of discipline and two teachers;
- observations of classrooms, corridors and playgrounds;
- document analysis of the records and achievement profiles of each student interviewed, as well as diaries which they asked the students to keep.

The long conversational interviews are a means of gathering maximum data from a participant where he or she speaks at length on their perspective. The researchers must necessarily be in the school for a long time to gather data and so they become friendly with staff and students and such bonds help to facilitate the flow of information which might not have surfaced in a formal interview using a structured format. This investigation, then, sees the people at the site as having the information which the researcher needs to carry out the study and that their perspectives must be taken into account or else the study would lack authenticity. However, people do not just give up their views so easily and thus a questionnaire would not have been appropriate. People have to be given

the opportunity to express their views in a non-threatening and relaxed environment.

Sampling (Chapter 18) is not a serious issue as there is the feeling that any teacher, student or principal would have a wealth of knowledge which could illumine the issue, because they all experience it in various ways. Consequently, this kind of research is not interested in making generalisations, as is characteristic of the scientific method and conventional forms of research. The main objective is to seek understanding of a phenomenon. When the report is written up it becomes an in-depth description and analysis of student indiscipline and its effects at two schools in St Jude parish. No case is made that the findings should be generalisable to the other eight secondary schools. However, if members of those other schools read the report and find similarities based on their own experiences, then the measures and recommendations which the report suggests may be of use to them (Chapter 19).

Maintaining an ethical stance in this mode of research (Chapter 20) differs somewhat from that in mainstream research. The researcher is interested in subjective knowledge – what people think they know, their beliefs and feelings – and so the stance of the researcher is to approach these people not as an expert but to court their approval in gaining access, to win their confidence in speaking about their lives and experiences and to liaise with them in the development of an understanding of the problem or issue. However, just like in mainstream research, procedures must be put in place to ensure that the inquiry is systematic – that it is rigorous and thorough. These are ethical issues, too, because the research process must be seen to be truthful and honest.

ACTIVITY 17.4

One of the reasons why alternative approaches to research developed is because some people feel that there is no easy way to describe the complexities of social life and thus objectivity is a futile aim.

1. Think of yourself as a researcher. Do you think it possible to be objective? Explain your answer.
2. Think of yourself as a participant in a research project on indiscipline at your school or college. What emphasis would you like to see in the procedures and data-gathering methods employed by the researcher – subjective or objective?

As in mainstream research, reliability and validity are the main criteria used to ensure that the inquiry is systematic. However, each is conceived differently; the emphasis is not on reducing bias but authentically portraying the views of the participants. ‘Validity’ refers to how credible and dependable the research procedures are – for example, that the researcher stayed at the site for a long time, that the interviews were in-depth and that the findings were discussed with the people at the site. This suggests that what was observed and reported was ‘on target’ and not off the focus of the research. ‘Reliability’ is obtained by using different methods (some combination of observations, interviews and document

analysis) to study the same phenomenon so that how participants truly feel is brought out. Reliability is a measure of how consistently each person interviewed interprets what is being asked.

The research report is organised in a similar way to mainstream reporting, but it may include narratives. Even though there is considerably more input from the participants, the researcher eventually writes up the report and interprets the findings. In the final analysis this conception of research is about an expert researcher using the knowledge of the people in the context to be able to conduct research which is more sensitive to the context than research in the conventional mode.

17.4.3 Action Research

A more radical approach to research is conducted by 'action researchers'. People who advocate action research do not see the value of having researchers come from outside a context to investigate social life, whether the researchers depend heavily on people at the site or not. This is because no one can understand the culture and ways of life of people in the context as well as its members. If researchers do not understand this fully, then their investigation may only be partially useful and there is little point in conducting such a study. This form of research is more explicitly concerned with human development than the other two approaches

BOX 17.6

Case study: Action research

Five members of the Lower Sixth in a secondary school in St Jude parish decided to embark on an action research project focused on improving the levels of lawlessness and indiscipline in the school. They brainstormed the project, choosing their informants, establishing a timeline, discussing alliances they had to seek and the challenges and difficulties which might lie ahead.

1. They selected 25 students from across the school, some of whom they knew to be in the habit of breaking school rules, and they included themselves. They had to enlist the help of the school's administration in obtaining permission from the parents of those students who were selected. They received permission for about ten students.
2. Their main research question was 'What can be done to improve discipline at School X?'
3. A multi-method data collection strategy was planned – interviews between each student and one researcher; focus group interviews with groups of three students and a researcher; an exercise based on several school scenarios where an opinion was called for on a discipline problem and a justification of the measures needed to curb indiscipline – this was carried out between one researcher and one student at a time. Researchers committed to keeping a journal describing their ideas and beliefs about indiscipline and how those changed over the time of the study.
4. All this information was recorded. The researchers (and the ten students) studied the data, discussed the possible alternatives for a plan of action and used their own knowledge of the context to assess what could or could not work.
5. They came up with a five-point plan (see below), which was submitted to the administration. The data to support these measures were presented in statistical diagrams such as tables and graphs as well as text and they included the verbatim language of the participants in a research report. They made the following recommendations:
 - To increase the extra- and co-curricular activities of the school and to vary the kinds of activities offered.
 - To give equal focus to non-competitive and recreational sports and not only emphasise those sports which involved the school in competitions.
 - To give more students responsibilities in school functions.
 - To 'twin' the school with another so that they could visit and assist each other and they could make new friends.
 - To vary the teaching and learning methods used and to incorporate the new information technologies.
6. As is the case with action research, this is only one phase of the project which could be written up as a research report. Getting ready to implement the proposals is another phase requiring active involvement of the administration and commitment on the part of the principal, teachers and students to work together. The next phase is to implement the proposals followed by evaluating what has been done and trying to remedy any problems which may arise.

we have studied. One of the reasons for ‘why conduct research?’ they would answer is to empower people, leading to sustainable development. This ‘purpose’ of action research is not explicit in the other approaches to research. It is by nature collaborative; people getting together as researchers to understand their context better and to improve it. It cannot be meaningfully done by one researcher.

In action research, people investigate themselves (Box 17.6). They may get training in research techniques but the point remains that they do not see themselves as ‘the researched’. They see themselves as people with a problem which they are actively involved in solving. They may only allow a ‘researcher’ in if he or she is prepared to develop a social connection with members, to experience the research process together as equals. The researcher is of value only if he or she is prepared to be immersed in the context and be deeply engaged with the people there. Action research is undertaken by people who understand that they have the power to investigate and improve their own lives. Whatever reforms they create would tend to be sustainable because they will have grown out of the collective deliberations of the people to whom improvement would be important. This approach to research is site based (for example, one school) rather than system based (many or all schools), and in the process everyone learns more about their role, that of others and how they are involved in the problem or issue. It is educative and it is concerned with human development.

Action research should not be looked on as merely a problem-solving exercise. The aim is to educate and liberate. Student researchers working together learn ways of collaborating and interrogating their own lives to devise well-researched strategies to improve their own context. It is a ‘bottom-up’ approach to research which empowers researchers.

ACTIVITY 17.5

1. List at least six reasons for conducting research.
2. Read the description of the action research project (Box 17.6) and explain how the researchers ensured reliability and validity to make the inquiry systematic.

SUMMARY

There is no one way of doing research, although the scientific method dominates how research is conducted in the social sciences. All approaches to research, however, must observe ethical relations with the people involved and in the stance taken towards the inquiry – the research process must be systematic, ensuring reliability and validity. The reason why research approaches differ is because they answer different questions. Mainstream research tends to answer the question ‘why?’; it looks to explain and possibly predict events. Alternative conceptions of research seek understanding and ask ‘how?’ or ‘what?’ questions, while action research is purpose-driven and looks for ‘what can be done?’.

17.5

Beginning a research project

17.5.1

Identify Your Research Problem

Any kind of research project must begin by identifying a topic which has some worthwhile aspect to it. From a general topic the researcher is expected to develop a narrower focus and isolate a problem or issue which impacts on the human development of Caribbean people in some way. A ‘research problem’ can be interpreted as a possible dysfunction or some difficult situation in social life such as ‘social problems’ (drug addiction, crime, homelessness), or it can be interpreted as an ‘issue’. The latter refers to some general questions about which there is continuing controversy in the society – for example, the relationship between social class and academic achievement; whether males are being marginalised in society; or the challenges and benefits of tourism.

In Chapter 3, language was suggested as a topical issue in Caribbean society and culture. Many people have strong opinions and judgements about the appropriateness of using the creole in a variety of contexts. Such a topic could be developed by the researcher into a specific problem; for example, whether in social life people rank each other according to use of the creole as against forms of the standard language. Where human development is concerned, such a study could point out threats to equity as people may not be judged fairly based on their use of

language. The first step, then, for a researcher is to identify a topic which is worthy of study and formulate a problem.

Narrowing the area of inquiry

Usually when confronted with having to conduct a research project, especially one in the field, students have some difficulty in identifying, selecting and shaping a topic for research. Here we consider some ways to get you started in trying to narrow your topic so that it will eventually constitute a robust study which is manageable to a single investigator or a small group.

Firstly, you must choose an area, topic or issue which is of interest to you. Let us say that the health system in the country is in a shambles, in your opinion. That is a place to start. Your topic, then, is generally something relevant to *The Health System in Country A*. You then engage in a brainstorming session to decide on how you might narrow this inquiry, because as it stands it is very broad and general.

Become introspective, and reflect on what about the health system particularly bothers you or that you would like to find out more about. Perhaps you are thinking about inequities, that the rich can access better health services through private health care. That really bothers you! (Now this is an important step as you are moving in a certain direction. You could have said that you were interested in investigating nurses, doctors, the administration of hospitals, efforts to combat HIV and AIDS, and so on.) You must be actively aware, though, that what you are trying to do is to carve out an area for study and therefore you are consciously deciding what can be included and what should be excluded.

- **WHAT** – You now know what you are interested in – inequities in the health system in your country. But this is still too large and cumbersome a topic. Perhaps if you think of a group particularly affected it might help you to scale down the ‘what’.
- **WHO** – Further brainstorming might lead you to think about maternal health and the fact that the maternal mortality rate was, say, 280 (per 100 000 live births) in 2013. This is considered ‘high’ in a region

which the World Health Organization considers to have higher than average maternal mortality rates. The average rate for the Caribbean was 190 in 2010 (WHO, 2013), for example. However, this is still a large topic, so it needs to become more manageable.

Perhaps there is a group of women who might be even more at risk than the others? Newspaper accounts reveal that women in isolated communities cannot easily get to a midwife or hospital service in time for delivery and death may occur if there are complications. Note that reading around the topic helps you to get enough information to scale it down. If this is convenient to you, and your country of study is large enough (Guyana, Belize, Haiti or Suriname, for example) you might be able to limit the study to maternal mortality in a particular region.

- **WHERE** – If you are a lone student carrying out such a project and cannot easily access a suitably remote area of the country, you might be able to find key informants in the country’s capital – people knowledgeable about the various regions, health services and documentary evidence. Note that convenience to the researcher is an important issue in charting your research project, as it is important to consider the practicalities of any project.
- **WHEN** – You would like to be as up to date as possible but you should also include information from a period before the present – perhaps a decade – to give the reader a sense of context and whether maternal mortality is steadily declining or may be on a slight increase. Therefore, access to statistics, line graphs or tables are key data for your study.

You now have the major elements for a focused research topic. Putting them all together you may come up with a working title such as – *Maternal Mortality in Region X, Country A – inequities in the health system*. Box 17.7 (pages 420–1) presents further examples in more detail of, once having identified a research topic and issue, as we have done here, how you might continue to orient the study in a more specific way.

ACTIVITY 17.6

Identify a topic for research which you would like to develop into a problem for a fully-fledged research project. At the end of chapters 1-16 in this book specific ideas are offered to you to work with in identifying and developing research problems related to the subject of each chapter. They could be altered according to your interest, resources and time available. You can work

with your chosen topic in the various sections below, continuing into Chapters 18, 19 and 20, to develop your project fully. To help you, one topic is identified in the case study in Box 17.7 and developed in two different ways. It is then taken through the various stages as an example of how you can develop your own.

17.5.2 Formulating the Research Problem

Relevance

The research problem that is selected must be relevant to an issue which is under debate, or perhaps which you think should be under debate in your field of enquiry. The problem selected must be of interest and relevant to the researcher or else the inquiry is likely to end prematurely or be done half-heartedly. Research is time-consuming and absorbing, especially as you reflect on its

various stages, the participants and the analysis which is developing. It sometimes does not go as planned and so the researcher has to be flexible in considering new lines of analysis for the data. Thus, choosing a topic which is interesting helps to keep the researcher on course.

It is also important that at the beginning of a project the researcher, especially if he or she is working alone, begins to think about how to manage the project effectively and what constraints will have to be addressed in order to conduct the research successfully (Fig. 17.5).

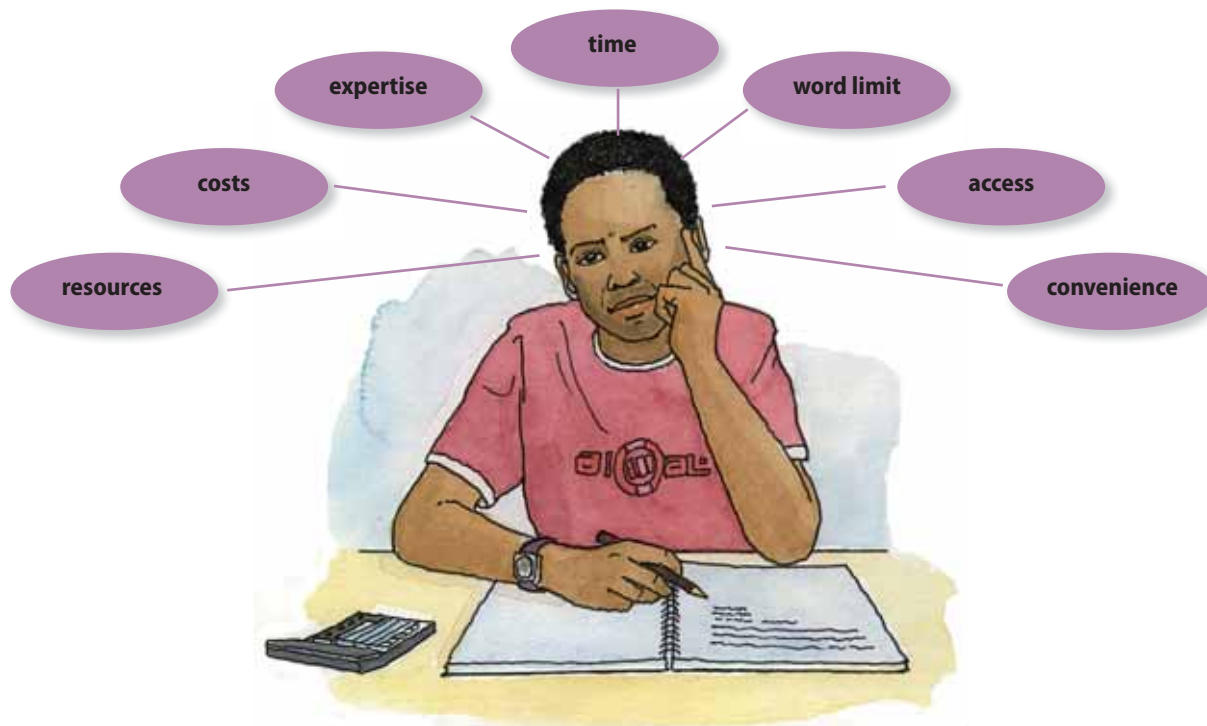


Fig. 17.5 Thinking about the research constraints

17.6

Research objectives

Research objectives are used to summarise what the study is expected to achieve. In developing research objectives for your study you should keep in mind that they should be:

- relevant and directly linked to the research problem;
- informed by the sources you have selected;
- clearly written.

When you are thinking about the research objectives for your study, think about what are the essential subcomponents of the problem which you have identified.

It is important to be clear about your research

objectives because they are then used to compose your hypotheses or research questions and the ways in which you state the problem. They are all part of the process of focusing the inquiry.

17.6.1 Focusing the Inquiry

Focusing the inquiry leads to the development of research objectives, hypotheses, research questions and ways of stating the problem. These are all devices which help the researcher to get a clearer idea of the inquiry. They also are examples of how research can be made systematic.

◆ **Think of how you can focus your identified research topic to indicate the specific problem or issue you are interested in researching.**

BOX 17.7

Case study research topic: Students' perceptions of the world of work

This case study looks at the development of a specific research study. Each of the elements identified below is dealt with in more detail in the relevant section of this chapter.

Identifying the research problem

- At this stage the title is a 'working' title (it is only a topic). For the inquiry to develop further the researcher needs to focus on a specific problem or issue coming out of this general issue. Although we have identified a research topic which impacts on human development and we have thought about possible resources of data for the study, we cannot begin to collect data until we have focused the inquiry in such a way that it isolates a specific problem or issue. Two researchers can take this topic and develop two different research projects based on the problem they each select.
- Researcher 1** could be interested in how the school is shaping students' perceptions towards the world of work. What messages are sent by the school (via the curriculum, teachers, career programmes, advice and counselling) which influence how students perceive the workplace? Additionally, the researcher could also find out those perceptions which are quite independent of the school. Researcher 1 could focus and state the problem as follows: *Students' perceptions of the world of work: how is the school preparing them?*
- Researcher 2**, on the other hand, may be interested in finding out what careers students wish to pursue and how they visualise themselves attaining those careers in the present organisation of the world of work. The researcher may use a ranking of careers (for example, high, medium or low status and high, medium or low income) and assess students' career aspirations in that light. The researcher may then come to some conclusions about whether the careers identified are useful to a developing country, whether the students want to stay in the Caribbean after qualification and, in their own estimation, whether they are likely to achieve these aspirations. In such a case the research topic could be focused and clearly stated to read: *Students' perceptions of the world of work: aspirations of youth and the needs of the society.*

Developing research objectives

The following could be research objectives for the first study:

- to identify students' perceptions of the world of work;
- to explore to what extent the school is adequately preparing students to function effectively in the world of work;
- to use the findings to make recommendations about the relationship between school curricula and the world of work.

These are the basic 'issues' which this study wants to find out about, and they represent the most important components of the problem which the inquiry intends to achieve.

For the second study, the following research objectives could be relevant:

- to identify the range of students' career aspirations;
- to assess whether students are likely to achieve these aspirations;
- to use the findings to make recommendations about the relationship between student career aspirations and the development needs of the country.

These three objectives represent the key issue for the researcher undertaking this inquiry.

Writing a research question

In the study 'Students' perceptions of the world of work: how is the school preparing them?', the study is focusing on the relationships between how students perceive work and how that is related to their experiences of schooling. 'Students' perceptions' and 'the school' are both variables. If you look back at the research objectives for this particular study you will see how closely they are tied to the following research questions:

- What are students' perceptions of the world of work?
- How does the school prepare students for the world of work?

Note that the two concepts are emphasised in each question and each question is seeking to find out more about the relationship between the two (that is, the relationship between students' perceptions and the world of work in the first, and between the school and the world of work in the second). Note also that you do not have to have three research questions just because there were three research objectives. The information needed to realise research objective no. 3 (to use the findings to make recommendations about the relationship between school curricula and the world of work) comes out of the two research questions.

BOX 17.7

**Case study research topic:
Students' perceptions of the world of work (continued)**

For the other study, 'Students' perceptions of the world of work: aspirations of youth and the needs of the society', possible research questions might be:

1. What kind of career aspirations do students have?
2. Why do students choose these careers?
3. What factors do students think will influence whether they achieve their aspirations or not?
4. What are the development needs of the country?

In this study the world of work does not appear explicitly in the research questions yet questions 1 to 3 are designed to elicit beliefs, facts and ideas students have about the world of work. The research questions explore the relationship between student career aspirations and the reasons why they choose such careers and the factors which may help or hinder them. Information on the 'needs of the society' (question 4) could be obtained from development plans, employment reports and other documentary evidence. The third research objective (to use the findings to make recommendations about the relationship between student career aspirations and the development needs of the country) is achieved when the researcher reflects on the information from students and compares it with the country's development prospects.

Statement of the problem

The second researcher might state his or her research problem in this way:

This study seeks to investigate how Springfield High School is preparing 4th and 5th formers for the world of work. Informal chats with students reveal that they know very little about choosing careers, nor do they have informed plans about further study. This researcher feels that the school may have too heavy an emphasis on academic work which, ironically, is supposed to be preparing students for the workplace, but the realities and competencies about how to choose and develop a career are sadly lacking. This study therefore aims to assess the school's curricula, looking for examples of career development and how the school prepares or does not prepare students for the workplace.

This statement of the problem says explicitly what the situation seems to be to the researcher and where the emphasis of the research lies. It does not mean that if contrary or different information crops up it would be excluded.

Data sources

For this type of study, the possible sources of information a researcher will know about before the project starts will be (a) people (students, teachers, principals) and (b) documents (timetable, course outlines for each subject and records of special planned programmes, such as Career Days, speakers from outside, visits to workplaces, and so on).

Statement of the problem

This is a concise description of the nature of the problem you are undertaking to investigate and what you deem important about it; for example, the emphasis you will be bringing to bear. It is not a restatement of the topic or a restatement of the research problem itself but at least a short paragraph fleshing out the problem in some depth, giving some idea of the context of the research and why this problem is worthy of our attention (its purpose, its educational value, its perceived impact on human development). Following are some examples of different studies and how they articulate the statement of the problem.

Topic: *Censorship in the mass media of Barbados: whose idea of censorship?*

Statement of the problem: This study undertakes an exploration of the processes of censorship in the mass media in Barbados to illustrate that what gets censored is largely content of a sexually explicit nature. The researcher

is of the opinion that the members of various churches who sit on the censorship boards heavily influence these decisions and that a cross section of the Barbadian public might not necessarily agree with these decisions. It is intriguing that extreme violence continues to pervade cinema, television and DVDs, showing that the moral position of the censors tends to be biased. Censorship is highly subjective and it can be argued that it infringes the rights of others. To continue to build the human development capacity of citizens these processes should tap a wider group of persons of different affiliations.

Again, this is an explicit statement of how the research problem appears to the researcher and what emphasis is employed in investigating the issue. In no way does this influence the outcome of the research, which may be quite contrary to what the researcher originally thought. If this happens, it becomes a fruitful area of discussion within the study.

The following example is a problem statement which is not clear on several issues and thus does not have the potential to guide the researcher carefully in conducting the inquiry.

Topic: *The rise of crime and the tourist industry in St Lucia: Skewed development.*

Statement of the problem: This study investigates the tourist industry in St Lucia to show that there is a direct correlation between its growth and a rise in crime statistics. The researcher considers several factors which may have impacted on this situation, particularly the uneven nature of development, where tourism is the only major alternative to the traditional sector yet it does not have the capacity to absorb much of the unemployed. In a modernising economy, where hundreds of youth are marginalised, the luxury and wealth associated with tourists provide a startling contrast to the lifestyle of the underemployed and unemployed.

Towards the end of this statement of the problem the researcher is suggesting that the wealth associated with tourism lures poor, unemployed persons to commit crimes. This is something that the research will not be able to show conclusively because in research on human subjects cause and effect is difficult to demonstrate with certainty. The best we can do is to show a correlation and then try to account for it. The inquiry would be more convincing if it analysed the nature of crimes committed over the time when tourism was increasing in order to determine whether much of it was tourist related. Only then could the researcher speculate that the tourists' apparent wealth made them an obvious target for out-of-work youth who committed these crimes. The research itself would have to survey the job opportunities available to be able to make this claim.

Sometimes you will see research reports where the 'Statement of the Problem' is followed by a 'Problem Statement'. This is a shorter and more succinct statement of the problem, such as: 'It has been reported that the rise in crime in St Lucia recently has been linked to development initiatives such as the growth in the tourist industry. This study seeks to investigate how the rise in crime in St Lucia may be related to the increase in tourism in that island.'

It is a matter of choice whether you wish to summarise the statement of the problem with a problem statement, but they are not the same thing. (In some research report formats the statement of the problem and/or the problem statement is followed by a separate 'Purpose of the Research'. For example: 'This study seeks to investigate how the rise in crime in St Lucia may be related to the increase in tourism in that island' is the purpose of the

research. However, the simpler format is to combine the statement of the problem/problem statement and the purpose of the research, as above.)

The statement of the problem, then, should contain all the important information a reader needs to get a snapshot picture of your research. It should indicate clearly who are the persons being investigated, what is the context (a school, a community) and where it is located, how many are involved in the study (a class, 15 residents) as well as a description of the problem or issue.

Hypotheses

A hypothesis is an expectation or prediction about the relationship between two variables in a research study. You do not have to have both research questions and hypotheses in your study. Usually a hypothesis is required for studies based on mainstream research and the scientific method where experimental research is important. Examples of hypotheses in experimental research include: 'Temperatures will decrease with increasing altitude' and 'Bacteria X causes the disease Y'. Variables such as temperature or altitude are quantified and the incidence of a disease can also be quantified. In social life 'variables' may be complex phenomena such as 'censorship', 'gender' or 'aspirations', which are multidimensional; experiments to determine cause and effect are well-nigh impossible. Thus, hypotheses tend to be found in studies in the natural and physical sciences, which quantify variables and rely on statistical data analysis.

However, the scientific method has been embraced by mainstream social scientists so that it is quite common to find social science research where both research questions and hypotheses are posed. In such cases the hypothesis narrows the research question so that it is very clear what information is being sought. But there can never be a case where one variable or concept is said to have 'caused' an effect, simply because in social life there are so many variables affecting people. For some of the studies described above, where research questions were developed, hypotheses can also be developed. For example:

- 'Censorship in the mass media in Barbados is mainly influenced by the Church.'
- 'Students' career aspirations bear little relation to the developmental needs of the country.'
- 'The school curriculum does not effectively promote knowledge about the world of work.'

Notice how a hypothesis in the social sciences uses different terminology from one in the natural sciences: 'is mainly influenced', 'bear little relation to' and 'does not effectively promote'. In social life, and in trying

to explain human behaviour, it is almost impossible to say that this causes that, because human beings and the circumstances of their lives are so diverse. Thus, in social science research, all the hypothesis does is to narrow the research questions further. Hypotheses can either be upheld or rejected by the outcomes of the research. Alternative and radical approaches to research prefer to use research questions alone as they are more flexible and can accommodate the variety and multilayered realities of people much better than a hypothesis.

17.6.2 Writing a Research Question

This is the central question which the research is attempting to answer. Such questions are derived from the research objectives. Research questions identify the problem and the relationships which the researcher would like to know more about. They are narrowly focused on the relationships between the concepts and/or **variables** under study. The term *variable* is more

A **variable** is the term given to an entity, a factor or a characteristic which is likely to change.

commonly used in mainstream research which is strongly influenced by the scientific method. It perhaps sounds too impersonal for social science research and so alternative approaches prefer to use 'concepts'. In our case study research project, for example, it is equally appropriate to refer to the relationship between the concepts 'students' perceptions', 'the world of work' and 'schooling'.

ACTIVITY 17.7

1. Look at the topic, research problem and objectives of a fictional research inquiry in Fig. 17.6.
2. Given the description of the study, suggest three relevant research questions.

A research question, then, states a relationship between two (or more) concepts (or variables) which the researcher wants to investigate. Research questions direct the inquiry in a certain direction and give it coherence. In so doing, they serve to delimit the inquiry. In other words, a researcher cannot stray outside the bounds imposed by what the questions ask. So, they serve the purpose of keeping the researcher focused on

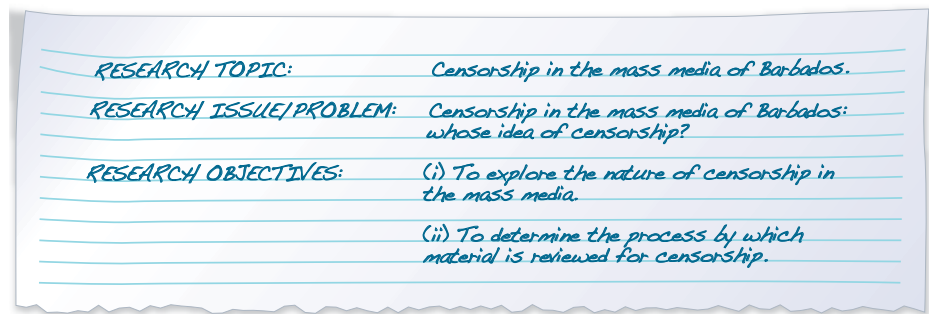


Fig. 17.6 A research inquiry on the mass media in Barbados

the inquiry as it is outlined by the research objectives and the statement of the problem.

Another way in which research questions are central to the inquiry is that they directly influence data collection. The researcher takes each research question and generates subquestions to include in interviews, questionnaires and other forms of data collection. The questions themselves suggest what kinds of data need to be collected. The systematic nature of the research process is indicated by the close link between research objectives, the statement of the problem, research questions and data collection measures (see Chapter 18). Finally, in writing up your research report the research questions must guide your narrative of your findings, the discussion and analysis of issues and the conclusion of your study (chapter 19).

17.6.3 Sources

Research objectives have to be *informed by sources*. One of the reasons for choosing a particular topic is that you know there will be some sources of information which you can tap to provide adequate, relevant and objective or trustworthy data. (Note that in the quantitative approach to research 'objectivity' is prized, while in qualitative approaches the 'trustworthiness' of subjective data is important to the study.) If, for example, you thought of a topic such as 'Toxic waste disposal in the Rio Cobre Valley', then you must already be aware that there is adequate information available in environmental and possibly newspaper reports. Such a study could rely entirely on documentary or secondary sources. If not, then you would have to collect field data (in the form of observations of the site and information from experts) and narrow the study to one area, possibly where there was a particular threat to the environment (e.g. where a factory or a dump site was located). Thus, one of the decisions a researcher must make at the beginning of a study is to assess the sources of data and whether adequate information exists that he or she can access. We will look at data sources in more detail in Chapter 18.



SUMMARY

To conclude a successful research project, the researcher must be mindful from the start that it should be conceptualised in a manageable way. Take the project mentioned in Box 17.7. If a researcher is working alone and has four months to pursue the research and he or she is doing other things as well, such as attending classes, then some decisions have to be made about data collection and selection of informants to make the process manageable, but at the same time ensure its validity and reliability. For example, questionnaire data might be too limited for such a study, though questionnaires are relatively easy to analyse. Because of the nature of the problem, interviews would probably yield more in-depth information. However, interviews generate pages and pages of data which are time-consuming to analyse. Considering all this, at the outset a researcher may decide to interview two teachers, four students and two adults outside the school situation. If for some reason the researcher finds that this is not working out successfully, the selection could be changed to focus only on students.



Wrap Up

Much thought is needed in the preliminary phases of planning a research project because the study as a whole is tightly integrated around the problem stated. Identifying the problem and stating it clearly is central to the success of a research project. Based on how the problem is stated, the researcher generates specific research objectives, questions and/or hypotheses and the issues these raise are further explored in the literature review. These issues will need to be investigated through research methods and procedures which are likely to yield the information required, followed by analysis based on the issues raised in the original research questions. The research project, then, is tightly integrated, specific and focused.

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Practice Tests

Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Distinguish between (i) reliability and (ii) validity in research. (4 marks)
(b) Give an example of each. (2 marks)
- 2 (a) Explain what is meant by 'action research'. (2 marks)
(b) Identify ONE possible research problem which might be suitable for action research. Give reasons for your choice. (4 marks)
- 3 For an identified research problem, formulate
(a) relevant research objectives; (3 marks)
(b) a problem statement; (1 mark)
(c) TWO research questions. (2 marks)
- 4 (a) Explain what is meant by the 'scientific method'. (2 marks)
(b) State TWO ways in which the scientific method influences research in the social sciences. (4 marks)
- 5 (a) Distinguish between experience and scientific knowledge. (4 marks)
(b) Give ONE characteristic of empirical enquiry. (2 marks)
- 6 (a) What is a 'hypothesis'? (2 marks)
(b) Describe TWO ways in which a hypothesis gives structure to a research study following the scientific method. (4 marks)
- 7 (a) State TWO differences between the sources used for social science research and those used for humanities research. (4 marks)
(b) Explain briefly how the availability of sources affects a researcher's choice of problem to study. (2 marks)
- 8 (a) Explain what is meant by the 'significance' of a study. (2 marks)
(b) State TWO ways in which the significance of a study informs its research objectives. (4 marks)

18

Data Sources and Methods of Collection



Traffic research taking place on a rural road

As we have already seen in the previous chapter, the data sources available to us are important in the formulation of research objectives, even in identifying the problem to be researched. In this chapter we shall look at ways of identifying possible sources of information, assessing the worth of data sources, crafting a literature review and collecting the data we need to address the research questions we have formulated (Chapter 17) and to use appropriate methods to construct an analysis of the data collected (Chapter 19).

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. develop a working knowledge of how to conduct systematic research;
2. assess data sources based on criteria of relevance, validity and adequacy;
3. craft a literature review relevant to the research problem;
4. select appropriate strategies for data collection;
5. appreciate the difference between quantitative and qualitative research.

18.1

Sources of information

Today a novice researcher is faced with a great deal of information on almost any topic that he or she wishes

to investigate. You might say that there is ‘information overload’. The sources of information vary from the existing research literature and Internet sources to newspapers, oral histories, archived data and even minutes of meetings. All researchers should be aware of a fundamental distinction in data sources.



Fig. 18.1 Flowchart showing how a research project progresses

- **Primary data.** This is an original source of data because it is unedited and exists in an intact form just as it was generated by persons or organisations. It represents first-hand testimony. Examples include historical and contemporary written documents such as diaries, logs, journals, minutes of meetings, letters and emails, as well as your own verbatim transcripts of interviews or the questionnaires you used to conduct your research project.
- **Secondary data.** This is information which has been edited, interpreted and organised in some way. Examples include government reports and statistics, censuses, textbooks, research reports, biographies, journal articles and encyclopaedias.

A skill which all researchers must develop is to become strategic consumers of knowledge – to bring critical thinking skills into play to evaluate any data source. One way of doing this is to have a set of questions which the researcher will use to evaluate the data source. For example:

1. Is the material relevant? To a large extent this is a judgement call on the part of the researcher. She or he has to decide whether a particular article or newspaper report is directly applicable to the research issue or topic and that the material is pertinent, significant and important.
2. Is the material written in language which is easily accessible by the student? Usually, if you can read and understand the material, you will be in a better position to say if the material is relevant to your study and whether it is adequate for your purposes.
3. Is the material adequate? While looking for information you may come across articles where the intention is not to present information in a comprehensive manner but to persuade you to accept a particular view. To judge that research material is adequate it must be factual and as objective as possible. It must be free of unsupported generalisations and opinions masquerading as facts.
4. Is there some quality control mechanism? If you want to use information in books, journals and newspapers, you can be reasonably safe in assuming that the content had to be screened by others and authorisation had to be given to print the material. As a consumer of knowledge, then, you would be fairly safe to summarise or quote from such sources.
5. Is there a danger of a conflict of interest? You need to ensure that the information source you have selected is credible is likely to be fair and objective and is not information put out by a company offering a particular product. For example, in writing a paper on the negative effects of second-hand smoke you will not rely heavily on research which is funded by the tobacco board.
6. What is the degree of validity of the data source? Validity is an all-embracing concept which refers to whether data can be regarded as truthful. Is it correct, factual, reliable, accurate and credible? If a researcher agrees to use certain data then she or he has come to a decision that the data are actually measuring or reflecting the issues pertinent to the phenomenon being studied.
7. Is the information valid and truthful? Usually this is of crucial importance in evaluating Internet sources, where we find much of our information today. The World Wide Web is the largest democratic space there is and any person or organisation can put up information for anyone to read. It is therefore the responsibility of the researcher to evaluate such sources carefully. The following are suggested guidelines:
 - Trustworthiness – Websites which give a great deal of information on the authors are likely to be trustworthy. Such pages should have not only the names of authors, but also their status in an organisation, the date on which the page was generated and contact information.
 - Credibility – It can be discerned by the reader if the authors have qualifications or credentials in the particular field and if they have published work on this topic already. Such evidence should be freely available on the website.
 - Accuracy – You must check to see whether the information you are getting is outdated. It may have been accurate a decade ago – for example, statistics of maternal mortality – but you will need to deliberately look for the most up-to-date sources. For a source to be accurate it must be up to date, factual, detailed and exact in its information.
 - Support – If statistics are quoted to support an argument, be sure to check on where the author obtained the information. There should be a trail for the information and the original source of the statistics should be cited.
 - Bias – If the author's viewpoint is heavily weighted towards a certain interpretation without much airing of other evidence or arguments, then the source may be tainted for your purposes.

ACTIVITY 18.1

1. Let us take the topic: *Religion – Emergence and persistence of folk forms of worship in the Caribbean.*

a. Using key words, generate a list of five possible websites with information on this topic.

b. Using the evaluative criteria described above, assess each of these websites.

c. To be able to carry out a systematic and rigorous research study, the researcher must begin with a comprehensive scan of the data sources which exist. These are quite diverse and depending on the type of study you are conducting you may only need one or two types of data sources – for example, journal articles and newspaper accounts. Whatever the sources of your data, however, they must each be assessed as valid sources, meaning that they should pertain to the content, concepts and subject matter which the study intends to investigate. A comprehensive survey of data sources, particularly print and online materials, helps to craft a good literature review.
2. Identify the possible sources of information for the research topics identified below, two of which were discussed in the previous chapter:

a. The issue of censorship in the mass media of Barbados.

b. The oral tradition in St Vincent in the twentieth century.

c. The rise of crime and the tourist industry in St Lucia.

d. Banana production in Dominica.

It might be useful to know exactly how the researcher is going to conduct the study in order to be accurate about the sources of information in Activity 18.1. For example, Topic D could be a study done solely using statistics of production and newspaper and Internet data about cause, consequences and alternatives. However, the researcher could also have conceived the study as relying solely on interviews with small banana farmers in Dominica or in combination with statistical, documentary and Internet sources. Thus, some idea of how the study is to be conducted will help the researcher to identify the best sources of information for the study.

At the outset, then, a researcher must investigate sources of information about the topic (Table 18.1) and these sources must be accessible. If, for example, in study B much of the information lies in very old persons and experts scattered throughout the country, the researcher may not be able to identify many of them or be able to reach them. Additionally, written accounts of various historical periods

may exist as *archived data* in museums but may be written in a different language – for example, French or Spanish – in which the researcher may not be fluent.

Table 18.1 Sources of information

SOURCES OF INFORMATION	EXAMPLES
Print resources	Books, periodicals, journals, newspaper reports, statistical digests, atlases, diaries, yearbooks, minutes
People	Experts, witnesses, oral histories, participants
Archived materials	In libraries, museums or private collections as print, video, audio or artefacts
Mass media	Radio, television, magazines, newspapers, the Internet, film/ cinema/video, DVDs, CDs

ACTIVITY 18.2

1. For each of the research topics A to D in Activity 18.1, try to assess the sources given in Table 18.1 against the criteria given in Box 18.1. Are there any areas of uncertainty?

2. Now apply these criteria to selection of data sources for your own research project (chosen in Activity 17.6).

BOX 18.1

Criteria for selection and use of data sources

- Whatever the data source, the researcher must be convinced that the selected data are:
- adequate – that is, the data should address the dimensions which the researcher wants to study;
 - relevant to the issue – that the data are not off focus or dated;
 - trustworthy and/or objective – whether in quantitative or qualitative approaches researchers want to be assured that the data they obtain are truthful and honest.

18.2

Writing a literature review

Reading the existing literature which is relevant to the research problem you have chosen, whether or not it is written specifically on the topic itself, is a fundamental aspect of research. It is best to carry out a survey of the available literature before formulating specific research questions. Thus the research process is **iterative** – you can

An **iterative process** is one which revisits different elements over and over again.

go back and forth clarifying the nature of the inquiry and tying it in with your research objectives, the statement of the problem and your research questions. The idea of the process being linear just recognises that there are certain steps or stages involved, but in the real world one stage does not have to be complete before moving to the other.

You will use what you have read about the research problem to construct your own **literature review** (Box

A **literature review** is a summary of information derived from books, journals, newspapers and other print sources.

18.2). However, this review is not a summary of all existing information but only the information which is relevant to the research questions of the study. Your research questions are a guide as to what to read and how to select information

to include in the review. The literature review in Box 18.3 integrates many of these characteristics.

An adequate literature review has the following characteristics:

- It summarises important information on the problem.
- It reports on studies done on the same or related topics.
- It locates the present study in relation to others studying the same or related problems.
- It identifies the strength of the studies read and ‘gaps’ which this study should be able to address.
- It emphasises the methods used by other studies, comments on them and compares them with the methods of the present study.
- It pinpoints any challenges previous researchers experienced in investigating this issue and how the researcher intends to address those challenges.
- It criticises the existing literature by comparing studies and indicating where they agree or contradict each other.
- It reflects on what has already been done and what others have said, and gives personal opinions and insights.
- It uses the most recent information and only cites dated information if it was a seminal or very important study.
- It is selective of sources; for example, based on the topic or problem, it may focus only on newspaper reports and journal articles; another problem may call for government documents and books as the main sources; yet other studies may rely heavily on Internet sources and popular media.

BOX 18.2

Hints on selecting useful research literature

1. Is the study on the topic which you are focused on? It is usually difficult to find a study that someone else has done which is exactly like yours. However, it may cover similar ground. For example, you may be interested in how boys and girls experience schooling and you may come across a study which focuses on subject choices by boys and girls. Initially, you may not have thought that this is relevant until you think about it and come to the realisation that how they choose subjects may be directly tied to their experiences of schooling, especially gendered curricular choices.
2. Does the study analyse the issue with another group? Your study may involve interviewing boys and girls at secondary school. But a study which looks at similar issues at primary school may give you a good reference point for comparing and contrasting trends as students transition from one level of schooling to another.
3. What perspective is the author or authors using? A study which has a different theoretical perspective may be helpful to you by serving as a source of contrast – a study may have a psychological, feminist or critical perspective. It may encourage you to adopt a perspective as well and so raise the theoretical aspect of your own work.
4. You need not only focus on the content of what others are researching but also on the methodologies they used. You may find strengths or weaknesses in the type of research design used, in the selection of the sample or in the ethical procedures undertaken.

Again, you should not only examine the findings of a study but what the study says about the data analysis procedures used.

Sometimes researchers adhere to the guidelines given in Box 18.3 but the actual writing is done in a staccato fashion – an account of who did what, when and what findings they obtained. These are stated plainly and directly without much comment. As a young researcher now starting out you should conceive of the literature review as an essay or similar report where you are arguing a point, and use the data sources to support or justify your statements or the decisions you made about your own research project. Your intention is to produce a narrative where you discuss findings in relation to your own study. This emphasis on discussion marks off the superior student from others who may just relate or recount what has been done. In other words, stating or summarising details of the research conducted by others on this topic is not as important as relating this information to issues in your research. Here are two fictitious example excerpts showing how a literature review is commonly written and how it can be improved.

Example 1

Xavier (2012) found that in high-status schools in Barbados girls outperformed boys in every subject and in low-status schools the results were the same. Jones, Gregory and Alleyne (2011) found similar results in the wider Caribbean. However, Gideon (2013) found that there were trends within trends and that boys in high-status schools were steadily improving to within reach of the academic achievement shown by girls.

Example 2

While the data is clear that girls outperform boys in all subjects in Barbados and the wider Caribbean (Xavier, 2012; Jones, Gregory & Alleyne, 2011), it should be noted that the literature sources on the whole tend to treat boys and girls as if they were two rival camps. This stance is not helpful and may actually create misleading findings and confuse our understanding of the issue. Consequently, Gideon (2013) chose to seek microlevel trends which reveal different categories of 'boys', which gives a more multilayered understanding of the problem.

BOX 18.3 A literature review

Topic: Gender and schooling

Research problem/Issue: Male marginalisation

Research objectives

1. To explore how males and females learn masculinities and femininities at school.
2. To determine how the learned behaviour of masculinities and femininities impacts on school performance.

Research questions

1. How do males and females experience schooling?
2. What are males' and females' perceptions of each other?

Literature review

Research on gender theorising has gone through many emphases over time. It began with studies explaining gender differences such as the academic achievement of males and females in terms of sex role theory – meaning that the roles and status individuals adopt are due to their sex or biological make-up (Parsons & Bales, 1956). Academic achievement then had to do with biology. This emphasis on biology then shifted to the role of cultural factors in shaping gender identities (Parry, 1996; Evans, 1999), which tended to focus on essentialist categories about masculinity and femininity. Being different was considered to be a matter of gender socialisation not genes, and in different cultures what was expected of males and females would differ because of cultural differences in gender socialisation. However, the relatively new development of brain-based learning showing that there were indeed capabilities and responses that were different and biologically in-built in males and females threatened to set back gender theorising to its biological roots (Moir & Jessel, 1991; Gurian, 2001). Today there is a certain amount of acceptance that the sexes are not equal, they are different, and it is this difference that needs to be studied in all its dimensions (Mac anGhaill, 1996; Bailey, 2000; Warrington & Younger, 2001). This study attempts to add to the knowledge base about the differences in academic performance between boys and girls and the theoretical position that has emerged in the Caribbean – that of male marginalisation.

Summarises,
reports on
different ways to
conceive the issue

Conflicts in
the studies

Researcher's
own opinion

BOX 18.3

A literature review (continued)

All the traditions have considered the phenomenon of male marginalisation and to a large extent their findings are inconclusive. Some theorists, especially feminists, doubt that male marginalisation exists as portrayed (Barriteau, 2003); some believe that boys are victimised or sidelined in schools, especially co-educational institutions (Sommers, 2000); and some that schooling is feminised or not adapted to the inherent characteristics of maleness (Parry, 1997). More interpretive and critical frameworks move away from generalising the issue of underperformance in school as a problem for all boys by pointing out that it happens with some boys and some girls (Gilbert & Gilbert, 2001; Weaver-Hightower, 2005). Critical theorists in particular point to the intersection of race and class in this phenomenon, again showing that it is not a generalised problem among boys (Ferguson, 2000). Feminist perspectives have tended to focus on girls as oppressed by the gender system of patriarchy with only some realisation that boys too are disadvantaged by patriarchy (American Association of University Women, 1995).

Once the debate moves away from studying only one gender and its perceived disadvantaged position in the school system, we realise that both boys and girls are involved in a gendered curriculum and power relationships that they negotiate in different ways. Today in an attempt to study how boys and girls are different more work is being done on the development of masculinities and femininities, seeing such characteristics as a continuum, meaning that femininity or masculinity are diverse and complex in themselves and we can no longer speak of them as having essential qualities (Martino, 1999; Nilan, 2000). This study about the development of gendered identities in the secondary school reflects the most recent ways that researchers are studying the issue of how boys and girls experience schooling. The methodologies include in-depth conversational interviews where students are encouraged to speak freely about schooling and their perceptions of each other. In this way researchers can study how boys and girls are learning to develop their masculinities and femininities, how they are similar and different and how masculinities and femininities impact on learning. It addresses the challenge of regarding 'masculinity' or 'femininity' as a fixed entity – a major flaw in previous works.

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'Gaps' occur in the theory of male marginalisation

Criticising, comparing studies, showing the strengths of different positions

Locates the present study in a body of work

Overcoming a 'challenge' in previous work

Crafting a literature review allows you to develop in knowledge and understanding of a particular topic or issue. It can also hone your information-seeking skills and you can become more information literate, which is a skill particularly prized in the twenty-first century – knowing which data sources to tap and understanding about search engines and other electronic sources such as e-books. At the same time, by perusing the data in a critical way, you are developing the ability to discriminate between those studies which seem to be unbiased and those which seem to be flawed.

18.3

Data collection

From the very beginning of the inquiry, as we have seen, the researcher has to be thinking about how to collect the data. However, it is only after the research questions have been developed and fine-tuned that the researcher is really sure about exactly what information is needed, its depth and emphasis. Thus, the final decision about *how* the data should be collected depends on how the researcher interprets the research questions. Fig. 18.2 illustrates the specific decisions a researcher has to make when planning a research topic on the damage done to coral reefs by increased tourism, and how they are closely tied to how the problem is conceptualised.

The most important decisions to be made about data collection are:

- how to select the people who (or the sites or documents which) can help to answer the research questions;
- what kind of information is required (facts, observational data, beliefs, attitudes);
- how many people, sites or documents to study;
- how the data can be collected in an ethical manner.

18.4

Methods of enquiry

In this section we will focus on the two main approaches to social science research – quantitative and qualitative methods. Attention is paid to their philosophical assumptions and how they each understand the social world. This is important because it guides what questions they ask, what methods of data collection they use, how they relate to the subjects of the research, what techniques they use in data analysis and how they report their findings.

Quantitative methods are based on a mainstream approach to research and the qualitative study is influenced by alternative approaches and action research perspectives. Sometimes researchers use a mixture of methods (which allows them to present data in statistics as well as text).

18.4.1

Quantitative Methods

When quantitative research is conducted what is valued is information collected about the natural world or, in the case of the social sciences and humanities, about things which can be seen and enumerated about people (empirical data), their history and their ideas. Following the steps of ‘the scientific method’ (Fig. 17.4), there is a tradition of collecting data on many items or persons (a large sample) so that a generalisation can be posed about major trends in the data. Because many observations are involved, statistical software is used to analyse the data – hence the term quantitative research.

An example of a research question which is suited to a quantitative approach is: *How does violent crime vary with socioeconomic class in Country X?*

For this, records on violent crimes can be obtained from police or other official databases and some idea of socioeconomic class can be obtained by locating the address of individuals involved in committing acts of violent crime. Usually the researcher will include hundreds or thousands in his or her sample so that the trends emerging would seem representative for that population.

As we saw in Chapter 17, such studies usually centre on two or more variables and how they relate. (Here the language of the natural sciences is retained in the social sciences/humanities.) The variables in this study refer to the incidence of violent crime and socioeconomic class. Also note that the researcher is not called upon to do much in terms of manipulating the data – she or he will only have to interpret the statistical results. This again is closely following the scientific method (Box 17.1), where to reduce bias the scientist uses instruments from which she or he directly reads off data. In this case the social science researcher will devise a form on which to record pertinent information from databases.

Quantitative studies in the social sciences and humanities may conform to a non-experimental or survey format, a quasi-experiment or a correlation study. Many of these require *sampling* techniques, and we will look at these later in the chapter.

1. *Non-experimental research* includes surveys of various kinds. This data is obtained by questionnaires and

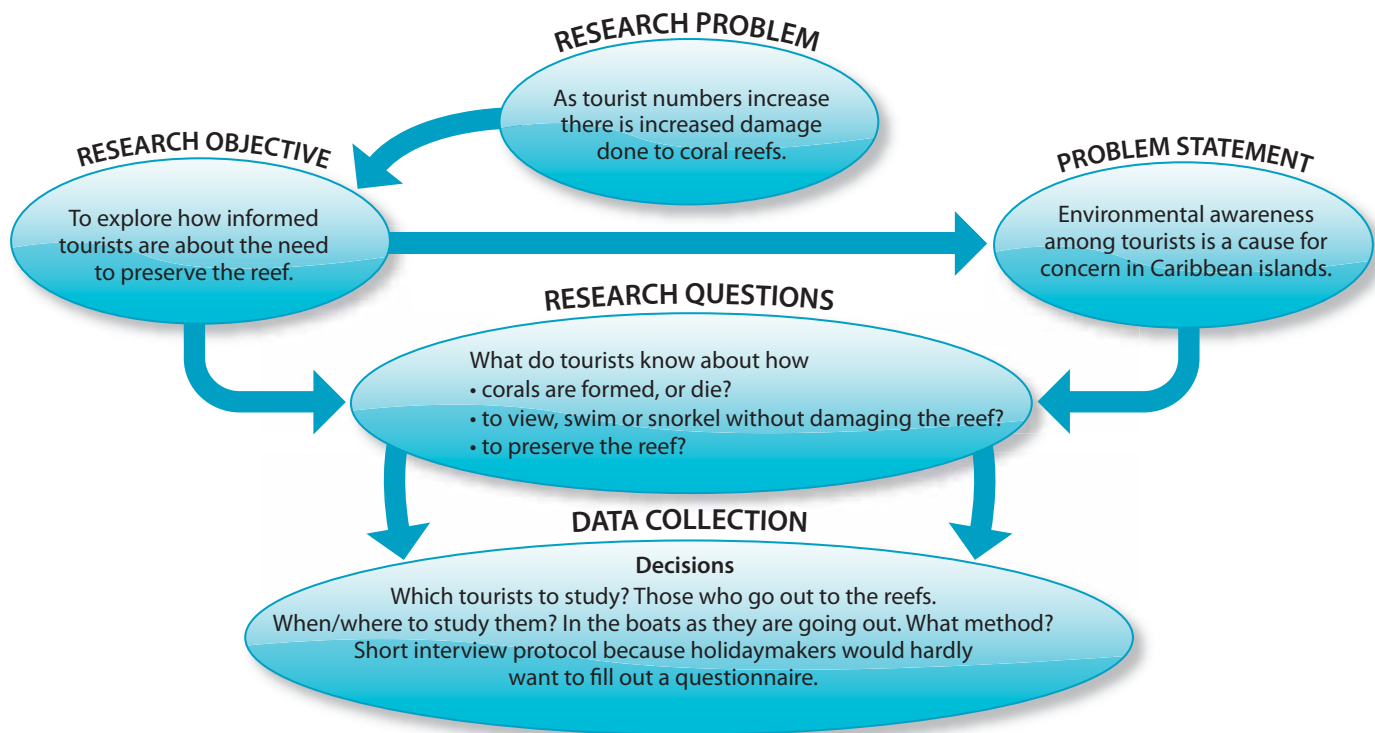


Fig. 18.2 Decisions about data collection for a research enquiry focusing on coral reef damage

interviews administered to a relatively large group of persons. The survey is used to answer research questions which can eventually be converted to percentages, averages and other statistical data. For example:

- How many families in Area X are single-parent families?
- Is there a difference in subject choice in Form 5 between male and female students?

This is known as **cross-sectional research** because

A **cross-sectional** study looks at one or more groups at one point in time. It is easy to organise but not as conclusive as longitudinal design.

the sample comes from a group of persons and they are only studied at one point in time (in other words, we would not know if there was variation in the findings, after the data were collected). Cross-sectional studies give a quick snapshot view of the perspectives of a cross section of the population at one point in time. **Longitudinal studies** are complex to

Longitudinal research refers to the study of one group over time noting change and continuity.

organise and so there are relatively few of them. However, they give more information on cause and

effect since groups are studied intensively over time.

2. The *quasi-experiment* is popular in social science research. Here conditions conform in some ways to the conduct of an experiment by a natural scientist. There are control and experimental or treatment groups as well as *random samples*. This is known as an *experimental design*. In experimental studies two groups are studied, one is administered a 'treatment' and the other acts as a 'control' group. The study indicates whether the variables in the treatment option made a difference or not.
3. *Correlational studies* focus on the relationships between the variables. It is important to note that in social science research 'cause' cannot be precisely determined so that correlation research becomes valuable. (Experiments such as those conducted by the natural scientists are more likely to produce definite information as to cause and effect). In correlation research it is understood that one variable does not necessarily cause the other, but that there is clearly some influence of one variable on the other. For example, there tends to be an observable correlation between poverty and all kinds of low achievement, ranging from educational achievement to self-worth, to socioeconomic class.

18.4.2 Qualitative Research Methods

Qualitative research is primarily engaged with how people understand their world as an explanation for their behaviour and actions. It goes into people's reasons for actions, motivations and perceptions and attempts to build a picture of their world from their eyes.

It is therefore mainly concerned with subjective knowledge. In order to elicit a person's worldview or deeply held beliefs and values, the researcher and the researched must enter into a close and mutually trusting relationship. Hence, the researcher can only get at the knowledge being sought by deliberately nurturing a relationship with the participant. The latter would not necessarily give up that kind of information easily and usually it would not be something which he or she would be willing to write on a questionnaire. The kinds of data or knowledge which the qualitative researcher seeks mean that the methods of data collection and instruments would vary from that of the quantitative researcher. It also means that maintaining an ethical stance in research becomes more problematic the closer the researched and the researcher get.

The research questions which a qualitative researcher would ask are often quite different from those a quantitative researcher would ask. A qualitative researcher is looking for how people make meaning so that the research questions will focus on tapping into feelings, perceptions, opinions, biases and knowledge. For example:

- What is it like for adolescent boys growing up in a single-parent family?
- What do adolescent boys take into consideration when choosing subjects in Form 3?

This data is highly subjective and yet instrumental in how human subjects make decisions and choose their behaviours.

18.5

Instruments of data collection

In social science research there are certain typical ways in which data are collected. In mainstream research which seeks a 'snapshot' of a state of affairs the most widely used methods are surveys. Survey data are obtained through questionnaires, structured interviews and observations using customised research instruments (see below) devised by the researcher. Other approaches to research may use the interview or observations but they do not place as great an emphasis on the instrument as in survey data collection methods. In these approaches the researcher is regarded

as the 'instrument' as he or she has to rely on intuition, experience and evidence to know which questions to ask and how to probe and prompt the participant.

Alternative and radical approaches to research seek in-depth information. This can be obtained through semi-structured, conversational and focus group interviews. A focus group interview is conducted by the researcher with three or four members of the sample and has a different dynamic to a one-on-one interview. Or the researcher may be or become a participant observer and live at the site or become a member of the group being studied. He or she will use as many methods as possible to deepen understanding of the context – largely informal interviews and constant observations. Researchers may also collect data by asking members of the sample to keep diaries or write narratives of their experiences and they will also keep a journal of the research process.

Although researchers interested in collecting in-depth data (qualitative research) may choose the semi-structured, conversational or focus group interview, any instrument devised may change slightly with each person or context studied. Today computer technologies have the potential to expand the range of possibilities in data collection with, for example, electronic questionnaires, interviews and chat sites.

18.5.1 Surveys

As we have seen, research based on the scientific method once dominated the world of the social sciences and many of the terms and concepts from research in the natural and physical sciences were adopted, though the meanings underwent changes as social science research developed alternative and radical approaches. Scientific experiments measured changes in, for example, density, leaf fall, chemical reactions, and so on. Scientists relied on instruments they either built or designed on paper to measure these changes. **Surveys** were often used.

A **survey** is an approach to data collection where a researcher asks questions and a respondent answers. This approach covers all types of questionnaires and interviews. This is a very popular form of social science research.

In mainstream social science research, the 'instruments' used for data collection are the questionnaire (it 'measures' attitudes, perceptions, opinions), the **interview protocol**

An **interview protocol** is the actual questions or can be used as a guide to the kinds of questions the researcher will ask the respondent during the interview.

or schedule, and the **checklist**. Note that *measurement* as

A **checklist** is a table where observations are recorded.

a term mimics scientific research in its use of numbers. In social science research in many cases measurement refers simply to the act of administering a questionnaire and recording the responses.

If researchers are interested in collecting survey data, they would use a conventional questionnaire or a structured interview protocol and/or an observational checklist.

Which if any of these survey techniques would also be applicable to qualitative research?

Questionnaires

A questionnaire is both a technique and an instrument of data collection, mainly used in survey research. The instrument (the actual questionnaire) is given out for others to complete or it can be administered over the telephone. Questionnaires yield data which are easily analysed because the responses are usually one-word answers, numbers or short statements. However, they give a 'static' picture of the participants or the context because they are a one-off means of collecting data – used once without much knowledge of the respondents (those answering the questionnaire), without knowing if they are telling the truth or if their perceptions change from time to time. Researchers feel that the advantage of simplicity of data analysis offsets these disadvantages. If most of the questions are of the forced-choice type, then such data are easily analysed, for example:

- 1 To what age group do you belong?
 (a) 20–25 years (b) 26–30 years
 (c) 31–35 years (d) 36+ years
- 2 What is the most important reason why you migrated from the rural to the urban area?
 (a) employment (b) transport
 (c) education (d) other

All the researcher will have to do is to tally all the numbers of people giving (a) (b) (c) or (d) as their response to each question and then analyse the patterns emerging. However, as you can see, the amount of information each question yields is limited. This could seriously jeopardise an inquiry because the choices which the researcher set for the questions may be off target. This is why many questionnaires have a few questions towards the end

which are open-ended where the respondent can give more information. For example, *How do you compare city life with that of the rural area?*

The researchers will have to use techniques similar to qualitative research data analysis to analyse open-ended questions. The forced-choice data can be analysed statistically.

In creating questionnaires the researcher has to make sure that most of the questions are central to the inquiry, with only some background data on each respondent if it is necessary. The layout of the questionnaire should be attractive and provide no challenges for the respondent. There should not be too many questions and so the researcher has to think hard to ensure that all questions are relevant. For example, if 'age' among adults is not an important consideration in your research (for example, information on effects of river pollution in an area), then it can be left out; similarly you may not need to know someone's address or occupation. The less personal information required, the greater the likelihood that the questionnaire will be completed. If you are doing a study on income you will have to find secondary data to fill in information which you cannot ethically ask on a questionnaire (e.g. 'What is your salary?') since most people are uncomfortable answering such questions. Even making it a forced-choice item does not make it acceptable to people. An example of an acceptable layout and format for a questionnaire is shown in Fig. 18.3.

Read Box 18.4 (page 437). Which types of survey might email be used for?

Interviews

The interview is a technique of data collection which is popular in survey research. The instrument used in data collection is the interview protocol or schedule – a list of the questions the researcher wants to ask in the order which would be used for all respondents. In mainstream research approaches where survey data are collected, structured interviews are used for data collection. In structured interviews the researcher does not deviate from the list of questions, or the order, but it is more flexible than a questionnaire as the respondent can give some added information. The interview is so structured because of the ease of data analysis. Although the respondents are allowed some freedom in responding, they are not allowed to speak at length – just enough for the interviewer to understand the point they are making. Thus, in data analysis the researcher does not have a great volume of data to analyse.

This questionnaire is for a school research project and all information will be kept in the strictest confidence. The researcher is grateful for the time and effort you take in completing the questions below.

Please tick the response which is most likely to be correct.

1. What time do you usually leave home on mornings to go to work?

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| (a) before 6.30 am | (b) 6.30 – 7.00 am |
| (c) 7.00 – 7.30 am | (d) after 7.30 am |

2. What form of transport do you usually use?

- | | |
|----------|---------------------|
| (a) taxi | (b) private vehicle |
| (c) bus | (d) other |

3. What factors determine the time you leave home (you could tick more than one response)?

- The time to start work
- The traffic encountered along the way
- The distance to travel to work
- The long wait for a bus at a later time

4. In your opinion what measures should be put in place in your district on mornings to make travelling to work easier?

respondents (or more) are brought together for a discussion of issues under the lead of the researcher. He or she might have a tentative protocol but the trend of the discussion in the group determines how the interview proceeds. The point of a focus group interview is to unearth the perspectives of the respondents as they respond to and comment on a discussion among their peers, which may yield data which might not emerge in an interview between one member and the researcher.

In a focus group discussion the researcher is playing many roles so that it could become stressful, especially if it takes more than an hour. It might be necessary to have another researcher (or someone unconnected with the research) to manipulate the recording device and to check periodically to make sure that it is recording. That person may also take field notes – observations of who is dominating the conversation, who seems to have more information, and body language in general. This is important for the researcher to know because afterwards, when reviewing the tapes and the field notes, she or he may decide to repeat an interview with those who were less talkative or those who seemed to have information or an altogether different view. During the focus group interview the researcher's attention is directed towards controlling the situation and maintaining order and turn-taking while absorbing what is being said and thinking of follow-up questions.

Fig. 18.3 An example of a questionnaire

Focus groups and in-depth interviews

Research studies which call for more in-depth data use the technique of a semi-structured conversational or focus group interview. In the *semi-structured interview* the researcher has an interview protocol to follow but allows the respondent to comment freely as the interview progresses and to deviate from the list if necessary. *Conversational interviews* do not have a written protocol; the researcher generally knows what he or she wants to find out but the emphasis is on getting at the perspectives of the respondent. To reach that kind of in-depth knowledge the researcher has to conduct long and sometimes multiple interviews with the same person and allow the respondent to do most of the talking. A *focus group interview* is a technique where three or four

Observations

Observational data give important information about a social context and provide a means for the researcher to corroborate what the respondents say in questionnaires and interviews. Observations may be done in an overt way, where the respondents know they are being observed, or covertly. While both may have disadvantages, in certain situations they can be useful. For example, you may think that if a person knew he or she was being observed, the chances are that person might not act normally. If it was on one occasion that is possible, but for ongoing studies the persons being studied tends to become used to the presence of the researcher and act naturally. Covert observation (or 'spying') has ethical implications (see Chapter 20).

BOX 18.4**Electronic mail**

Email greatly enhances the possibilities of tapping a larger sample than a lone researcher could manage given the usual time and travel constraints. However, it will only be useful for some studies because it means that all the respondents must have a computer or at least be computer literate. They constitute a technologically savvy sample. Thus, it will be useful for a study, for example, on how the Internet and/or email can help or hinder secondary school students in their school work, because this sample population will be knowledgeable about this. It will be less useful in a study about how television impacts on students' academic work, as most people have a television but not all have home computers or access to one. If you are thinking of collecting data via email, you have to be certain that those who do not have access to computers or are not computer literate (those you are excluding) do not have important information which you need for your research.

If the majority of your class or a group you interact with all have email addresses and are willing to participate in a study, you can email them your questions via bulk mail. It is also useful for open-ended responses as the text you receive is already in a typed format which you can 'cut and paste' continuously as you analyse the data. However,

you must note that it would not be an anonymous questionnaire you are administering. This strategy will yield survey data but if you wish you can choose to use the email to seek knowledge at greater depth by interacting with only a few persons and requiring them to give detailed accounts, feedback and descriptions. And you may engage them further by questioning or asking for clarification on what they have already submitted so that in effect you have a second round of interviews.

It may be possible to use the email to access business and industry if they have websites showing email contacts, as well as groups and organisations such as NGOs and humanitarian, environmental and cultural associations. Using email may enable you to access activists more easily than more traditional techniques (for example, leaders of environmental awareness groups or those advocates lobbying for some changes in social life which could be relevant to your research). Sometimes there will be no response, so your initial contact must state clearly what your research is about, who you are and exactly what information you are requesting and how you will use this information. Needless to say, there are some areas you should not ask about – financial affairs being the main one.

Survey research tends to use instruments to observe and record social life, while alternative approaches seldom do so. For example, a checklist is the most common instrument used to record instances of certain behaviours observed by the researcher in survey research. Note that in Fig. 18.4 the researcher limits the kind of observations made to what is stipulated on the checklist. Over time, looking at the data for each student, the researcher can analyse the data quantitatively and come to some conclusions about how boys and girls behave in classrooms at that school. If the research is carried out in many schools that are representative of schools in general in the country, then according to the scientific method the findings can be generalised to all schools in the district or country.

However, if the researcher wants in-depth observational information on a few students, he or she may observe them in classrooms, corridors and playgrounds and record as much as possible using field

notes. If an observation checklist is used it is less rigid than that shown in Fig. 18.4 and the researcher adds or removes categories according to how the situation is developing. In survey research the researcher ends up with numerical data – how many times a student was observed behaving a certain way over, say, a month – while in-depth approaches end up with field notes and descriptions to be analysed by qualitative methods.

Participant and non-participant observation

In non-participant observation, the researcher carries out observations in an objective manner and takes care to keep a 'distance' between him or herself and those under observation. The example above (Fig. 18.4) shows the researcher as a non-participant observer. This is common in quantitative-type studies relying on the scientific method. However, where the researcher relates closely to the people being researched, especially if she or he is essentially part of the group under research, the

A researcher is investigating how gender differences are manifested in a co-ed classroom and wants to do this by collecting survey data. The researcher devised an observational checklist that she will use every five minutes to record observations of the classroom throughout the day. Ten students have been selected (five boys and five girls) to be observed using a checklist (below) for each student.

Schedule of Observations

Date: 20/2/14 Gender: M ☐ F ☒
 Name: Jane Douglas
 Form: 4C
 Timetabled subject: English (3rd period)

What is the student doing at these times?

Behaviours/time	10:05	10:10	10:15	10:20	10:25	10:30	10:35	10:40	10:45
Listening to the teacher – on task	✓	✓	✓						
Writing – on task								✓	✓
Interacting with the teacher – on task				✓	✓				
Participating in different ways – on task						✓			
Talking to classmates – off task							✓		
Walking around – off task									
Being disruptive									
Ignoring the teacher									
Ignoring the task in other ways e.g. not doing anything, doing other work									

Fig. 18.4 An observational checklist

observation is described as participant observation. This type of research is often called *ethnography*. An example might be an anthropologist living in the community she is researching. To some degree it will be impossible for her to distance herself too far from the community, as the whole point of living there for a long period (perhaps months or even years) is to build up trust so that the local people will feel able to share freely with the researcher. Or you might have an ethnographer researching the experiences of staff on a cruise-liner. Here the researcher may actually take a job as a steward or porter so that his relationships with the focus group are close and trust and even empathy are built up between researcher and group members. Box 18.5 gives some examples of Caribbean ethnography.

18.5.2 Sampling

A sample is a subset of a **target population**.

The term **target population** refers to the people from whom the researchers want information.

For example in Fig. 18.2, the target population is the tourists who board glass-bottomed boats to go out to the reefs. However, researchers cannot get information from all the tourists – perhaps because there are too many, or the numbers of researchers may be few and time may be short. In this case they select a *sample* which is representative of the target population. It is important to have a representative sample because then the findings of the study can be applied to the entire target group.

Probability sampling

There are two kinds of sampling procedures – probability and non-probability. **Random sampling** is an example of probability sampling

Random sampling is the means whereby a researcher selects a representative sample. It is more accurate than other means of probability sampling in defining a representative sample.

and is characteristic of research which follows the scientific method.

Random sampling

If random sampling was applied in the case of the tourists (Fig. 18.2), researchers would have ready a list of random numbers and observe and identify tourists by a number as they came on board. For example, if the numbers on the list ended in 8, 16, 1, 5, 10, 2 and 20 (a random set of numbers), they would seek an interview with those seven persons on this trip. Computers may be used to generate the random numbers.

In a random sample every member of the target population has an equal chance of being chosen for the study. There is no researcher bias in the selection of informants. Thus, the probability is that they will have come from a cross section of tourists who will normally visit the reefs and not from some specialist population – all being marine biologists, for example (even if that happens, carrying out the study over a period of time on different boats will nullify the effect of any specialist population.) If the sample is chosen randomly, then the researcher feels that whatever the findings, they are

BOX 18.5

Ethnographic Caribbean studies

The early ethnographies of the Caribbean, produced by Lloyd Braithwaite, R.T. Smith and M.G. Smith were preoccupied with how the society was structured – social structure, social stratification and family structure. Each researcher did detailed fieldwork in different parts of the Caribbean carrying out systematic observations and interviewing people in all walks of life. The interviews were not for the most part formally organised but happened as the researcher observed a family, farmers, bystanders, people in 'rum shops', in offices, those attending ceremonies and others going about their daily lives. The researchers were interested in culture and social relationships. Their work was to record the ways in which different groups of people participated in the culture of their society. This gave them insights into how the society was structured. For example, Braithwaite and R.T. Smith theorised that Caribbean societies were plural in nature but evolving towards heterogeneity, unlike M.G. Smith who saw the values of the different groups as strongly divergent, producing and reproducing entrenched cultural pluralism.

In contemporary social sciences, ethnographers do not necessarily live with the group under study for a long time but interact freely and continuously with them. Thus, a member of a school (student or teacher) can study his or her own context, and so too can members of churches, youth groups, families and other groups. However, there are certain issues (such as familiarity) which may make such a study difficult. In most circumstances, researchers obtain the requisite permission to visit a site as often as possible to study the culture and its members. They may even carry out small tasks and make themselves useful to the group (i.e. participant observation). In this way they are more likely to develop an insider's perspective. An insider's perspective is in turn more likely to yield insights on agency. Ethnographies today emphasise how people make meaning in their various life situations.

Examples of ethnography

- Karen Fog Olwig (2007) has written a book on *Caribbean Journeys* which traces what migration means to three families who now live in the

diaspora. Over 60 years ago each family left Jamaica, Dominica and Nevis. She relied mainly on interview data (largely conversational interviews) and what emerges as important in the study are the family narratives which keep alive the Caribbean homeland and the preservation of family networks across different countries.

- Barry Chevannes (1994) in *Rastafari Roots and Ideology* tells the history of the Rastafari movement through an ethnographic study of 30 members, detailing the origins and changes to their belief systems, practices and world views. He used life histories supported with oral testimonies and documentary sources.
- Heather Horst and Daniel Miller (2006) in *The Cell Phone: An Anthropology of Communication* examines in an ethnographic study how the cell phone has become central to the lives of low-income Jamaicans, transforming relationships in their everyday routines.
- Irma McClaurin (1996) in *Women of Belize* weaves a narrative of the lives of three women, East Indian, Garifuna and Creole, detailing their experiences of marriage, motherhood, emigration, work and domestic violence. This ethnography investigates gender inequalities at home and in the workplace, showing how these women challenge gender norms.

In each case the researcher 'captured' a group and wanted to study their culture. The researcher relied on immersion in the context to help him or her interpret the culture accurately, but in any case the meanings were also discussed with members so as to minimise misconceptions.

The subjects have to feel strongly about participating because this kind of research tends to be intrusive as it explores not only their hopes and fears, but may also explore private situations and it takes up a lot of their time. The researcher writes a narrative and attempts to build up some theoretical statements about the relationships studied. The emphasis is not on formulation of a generalisation (theory) which could be extended to similar groups, but to seek 'deep understanding' of the culture of a group of people.

likely to be a true reflection of the state of affairs. And most importantly, the findings of such a study could be generalised to all tourists who are visiting that island and the reefs (the target population). Random sampling, then, allows researchers to generalise their findings.

School researchers and other persons can engage in random sampling by simply putting all numbers in a 'hat' (container), numbers or names corresponding to individuals, and then impartially withdrawing a certain predetermined number. For example, in order to choose

six members of a class to interview about their experiences with a new timetabling arrangement, if a random sample is needed, all the names of the members of a class could be put into a container and six names withdrawn. The purpose in using a random sample is to be able to confidently generalise findings to the target population – which in this case would be the whole class. However, the larger the numbers involved, the more likely the generalisation would be true – that is, to get a sample representative of the whole school (1000 students), a random sample could be generated for 100 students. In this case pulling numbers from a hat would not work (there would be 1000 numbers) and so log tables or computer-generated numbers can be used to select 100 names.

Stratified random sampling

This is based on random sampling but divides the sample into subsets based on certain categories which are important to the study. Suppose researchers were studying how secondary school students manage their money (pocket money, allowances, gifts, money earned doing chores or odd jobs), they might want to specify older students, who possibly might have more money to spend, and equal numbers of girls and boys. This could be done without introducing researcher bias. For example, lists of fourth- and fifth-form students could be organised by gender. Then by applying a list of randomly generated numbers the researcher could select the desired number of students – say 20 males and 20 females from that master list. This would be an example of a random sample stratified by age and gender and it would be generalisable to the whole fourth- and fifth-form target population.

Systematic sampling

In certain situations researchers may want to use random sampling but because of the nature of the context they cannot do so. Suppose market researchers stood in a grocery store near some food item they were researching and wanted to randomly sample users of the product. They would not be able to use a table of randomly generated numbers. Such a table might yield 25, 9, 50, 12 and so on. By the time the twenty-fifth person approached the shelves the ninth and twelfth would have long gone (though researchers could devise ways to make this work). If the researcher wanted to be able to generalise the findings to a target population of the buying public for that product he or she might decide to use *systematic sampling* instead.

Systematic sampling allows the researcher to select any *n*th person to form the sample – ‘n’ can stand for any

number. Depending on the context a researcher might decide that $n = 5$ or $n = 8$ and only request information from every fifth or eighth person who comes along. This form of sampling is very popular among mainstream researchers, although it does not ensure that every member of the target population has an equal probability of being chosen. Some persons will never be chosen: if $n = 5$ then only the fifth, tenth and fifteenth persons (and so on) will be eligible for the sample. However, researchers feel that systematic sampling still has a random character to it which allows them to generalise to the target population with confidence. One condition which might increase their confidence in the generalisability of findings is if the sample is very large, say about 1000 persons. Then they could feel certain that, although they were using systematic sampling, the likelihood was that they were getting a good cross section of their target population because the sample was so large.

Non-probability sampling

Probabilistic sampling measures are typical of mainstream research in the social sciences and experimental studies in the natural and physical sciences. These studies tend to rely on large samples because the generalisability of the findings is considered to be important. Consequently, they do not seek in-depth data but a ‘snapshot’ look at the population under study – a quick summary of the state of affairs now. Since sample size is large the data tend to be quantified so that they can be reduced and presented in the form of statistical diagrams. Non-probabilistic sampling is utilised in alternative research approaches and action research, where it is not important to generalise findings to the target population. These studies are designed to seek deeper understanding of a context rather than generate new knowledge, test a theory or solve a problem. In such studies researchers deliberately seek subjective data because they need to know more about the social and cultural life of members. Unlike in mainstream research, researcher bias is not a major consideration and so a sample could be chosen in different ways. One typical way is by purposive sampling.

Purposive sampling

Suppose researchers were interested in studying how the older persons in an area were experiencing social life. The kind of information they would want would be the experiences of these people, their reflections on their lives, their fears, beliefs, habits and practices. This is in-depth, subjective data and each person generates a great deal of data which the researcher has to manage. Hence, sample size cannot be large. Depending on the time frame and the

researcher's resources, it may be that only ten persons could be sampled. However, just ten persons could generate data for a whole book, and often that is the case because the researcher remains in the context for a long time.

The researcher can begin in a tentative way by studying one such person. A second person may be selected based on information from the first person, or from information the researcher gets otherwise. Based on data from the first two persons the researcher may start developing a line of analysis and so looks for a third person who might help to deepen this analysis. For example, in speaking to the first two older persons the researcher may begin to see differences between them based on their family circumstances. He or she may be interested in exposing as a myth the belief that being at home with a family is comforting to older people by demonstrating the extent to which they are treated as children and even abused. Purposive sampling tends to be used in qualitative studies where in-depth understanding is sought. There is no attempt to generalise findings because the purpose of the study is to better understand the lives of the persons studied.

Convenience sampling

This is perhaps the most popular method of sampling which is used in small-scale studies. For convenience or economy the researcher selects the people or sites nearby to study. This may be your classmates, a group of farmers living close to you, traffic congestion near where you live, pollution along a river valley in your area, and so on. This is a non-probabilistic sample and the findings cannot be applied to anyone or any site not included in the study.

Decisions about data collection, then, depend on many factors – namely the research problem, the research objectives, the statement of the problem and the research questions or hypotheses. Taken together these give a clear indication of what type of data are being sought. This helps the researcher to decide on a sampling strategy, which inevitably leads to the study being labelled as either quantitative or qualitative. Sometimes researchers use a mixture of methods (which allows them to present data in statistics as well as text).

In-depth data collection techniques generate a large amount of data which is mostly text. Qualitative data analysis methods are used to make sense of the data (see Chapter 19) but it is a time-consuming exercise. That is why studies which focus on in-depth knowledge of a context only select a few respondents, while mainstream research collecting survey data requires a large sample. The latter is influenced by the scientific method, where

generalisation and probabilistic sampling are important while in-depth research sampling is less rigorous as the specific context itself is being studied. If the sample is large and the data need to be quantified and statistically analysed, the interview will most likely be a *structured interview* where the researcher follows an interview protocol. *Semi-structured* and *conversational* interviews are more open-ended and wider-ranging and do not adhere strictly to a protocol (and are more likely to be found in qualitative research). Telephone interviews and audio conferencing are also possible, as well as the use of email (see Box 18.4).



Wrap Up

In collecting data, the researcher has to be clear about the type of research which is being conducted. If the purpose of the research is to generalise findings, test a theory or generate new knowledge, then sampling procedures must be organised so that generalisability is a consideration. If deeper understanding of a phenomenon is being sought, then sampling can be purposive. Similarly, in interacting with participants the type of research being conducted dictates the instruments, techniques and approaches used for data collection. If the research project relies on survey data, then conventional questionnaires and structured interviews and observations may be sufficient. If, on the other hand, in-depth understandings of people's feelings and perspectives are needed, then a range of subjective data collection strategies may be used – focus group interviews, conversational interviews, journals, narratives and autobiographies.

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McLaurin, I. (1996). *Women of Belize*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Olwig, K.F. (2007). *Caribbean Journeys*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Structured response questions

- 1 For a study on the upsurge of crime in a Caribbean country:
 - (a) suggest TWO relevant data sources; (2 marks)
 - (b) describe TWO possible data collection methods. (4 marks)
- 2 (a) Define the following terms:
 - (i) empirical data;
 - (ii) focus group interviewing. (4 marks)
 (b) Give ONE criterion for using a focus group in qualitative research. (2 marks)
- 3 (a) Distinguish between probability and non-probability sampling. (2 marks)
 (b) Outline the procedure followed in ONE example of EACH of these types of sampling. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) Identify TWO characteristics of a well-constructed questionnaire. (2 marks)
 (b) Explain how a questionnaire would be used
 - (i) in a quantitative survey; (2 marks)
 - (ii) in a qualitative study. (2 marks)
- 5 (a) State TWO types of primary data likely to be used
 - (i) in a qualitative study; (2 marks)
 - (ii) in a quantitative study. (2 marks)
- (b) Describe ONE type of sampling that would be suitable for EITHER (i) or (ii). (2 marks)
- 6 (a) What is a 'target population'? (1 mark)
 (b) State TWO criteria a researcher might use to choose a target population in quantitative research. (4 marks)
 (c) Which of these criteria would also be relevant in qualitative research? (1 mark)
- 7 (a) Identify TWO Internet sources which might be suitable for use in a qualitative study. (2 marks)
 (b) Outline ONE way in which EACH of these sources would be useful to the researcher. (4 marks)
- 8 (a) Explain what is involved in 'participant observation'. (2 marks)
 (b) Give ONE advantage and ONE disadvantage of participant observation in qualitative research. (4 marks)
- 9 (a) Distinguish between primary and secondary data. (2 marks)
 (b) Give TWO reasons why secondary data should be used alongside primary data in either a quantitative or a qualitative study. (4 marks)
- 10 (a) What is a 'literature review'? (2 marks)
 (b) Identify TWO ways in which a literature review informs the construction of a research study. (4 marks)

19

Analysing and Presenting the Data



Female student working in the library

This chapter focuses on analysis of data and the writing up of the project report which the researcher produces after the data have been collected and analysed. Once the data have been collected, they must be analysed and then presented in a form which is easily read by the **target audience**, whether it is fellow students and scholars or government policy think tanks.

The **target audience** refers to the readers you expect to be interested in your study.

Data presentation can be tabular, graphic or in text form. Data analysis is a systematic process of applying statistical techniques (as done in quantitative research) or of identifying codes and themes (as done in qualitative research) to describe and condense the data. Note that the steps shown in Fig. 19.1 are more characteristic of quantitative than of qualitative research. The conclusions and recommendations included at the end of the study must acknowledge its limitations, highlight new knowledge or conceptual approaches and admit to contentious findings in relation to the original research objectives. Lastly, it is important to reference the study findings properly, using a recognised bibliographical system, especially if the findings are to be published in any form.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. analyse and present data on an identified issue or problem using appropriate methods;
2. make informed decisions and recommendations based on the outcomes of the inquiry.

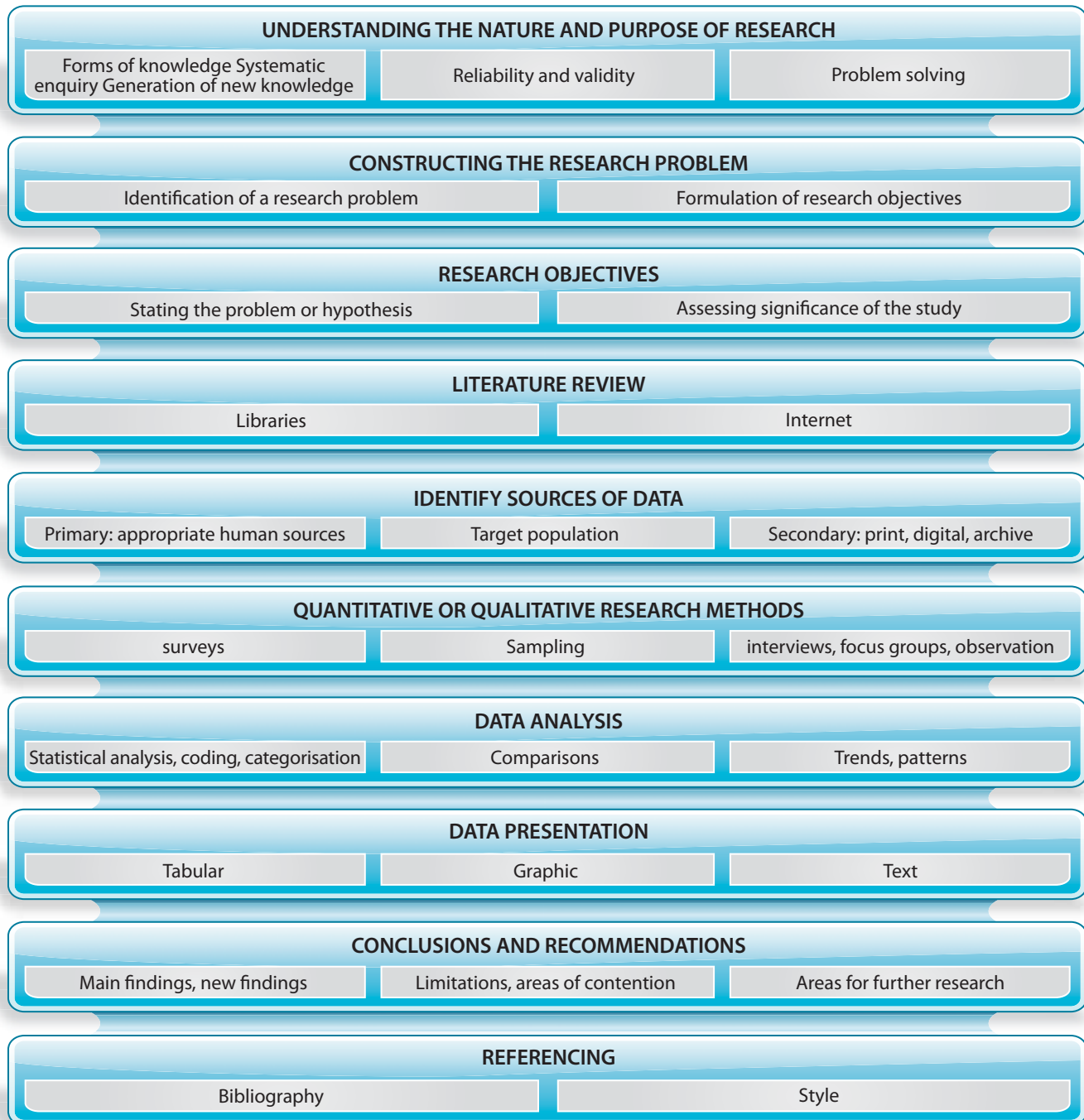


Fig. 19.1 Concluding the research flow

19.1 Presenting the data

Data can be presented in a number of different ways. The researcher chooses the method of presentation according to (a) the type of data (e.g. whether in the form of text or numbers), and (b) what she or he wants to highlight (usually trends, patterns or statistical relationships).

19.1.1 Tabular Presentation

Tables are most often used for **statistical data**.

Statistics are figures that illustrate something which happens in the real world. Although you can study statistics as part of mathematics, the numbers used are always related to real events and lives.

Most tables are used to present figures (e.g. Tables 9.3 and 10.1) but some may be used to compare concepts or as a type of summary (e.g. Tables 8.1 and 19.2), especially in qualitative research. Tables may also be used to illustrate simple relationships or to show the characteristics of the sample at a glance.

Using a table to show numerical data offers the following advantages:

- The figures are exact and can be read as they stand. Any calculations you wish to make or conclusions you wish to draw can be easily followed by the reader.
- Tables are easy to compare with each other, so long as the data are directly comparable. As long as the tables show the same information for different years, or for different groups of people or countries in the same year, you can draw comparisons with regard to trends, for example.
- Tables can be adapted to show exactly what you want them to show, by using different numbers of columns or rows, different headings, etc.

Many modern computer software programs allow you to create graphs from tables containing **raw data**.

Raw data are the figures from a questionnaire or survey before you have combined them or drawn conclusions from them.

As well as the headings row of a table, you can also use other headings and subheadings. But the more complex you make your table, the harder it is for the reader to glean from it the information you want to present, so it is probably wise to keep tables relatively simple.

19.1.2 Graphic Organisers

A graphic organiser may be anything from a bar or line graph to a flow chart, a Venn diagram or a Y-chart. Different types of graph may have different uses when presenting your findings. For example:

- **Line graphs** show trends well.
- **Histograms** or bar charts allow comparisons.
- **Pie charts** show proportional relationships.
- **Divided bar graphs** can effectively combine a bar chart with a pie chart.
- **Pictograms** give a human dimension.

A **pictogram** combines artwork with a diagram, as in Fig. 19.2.

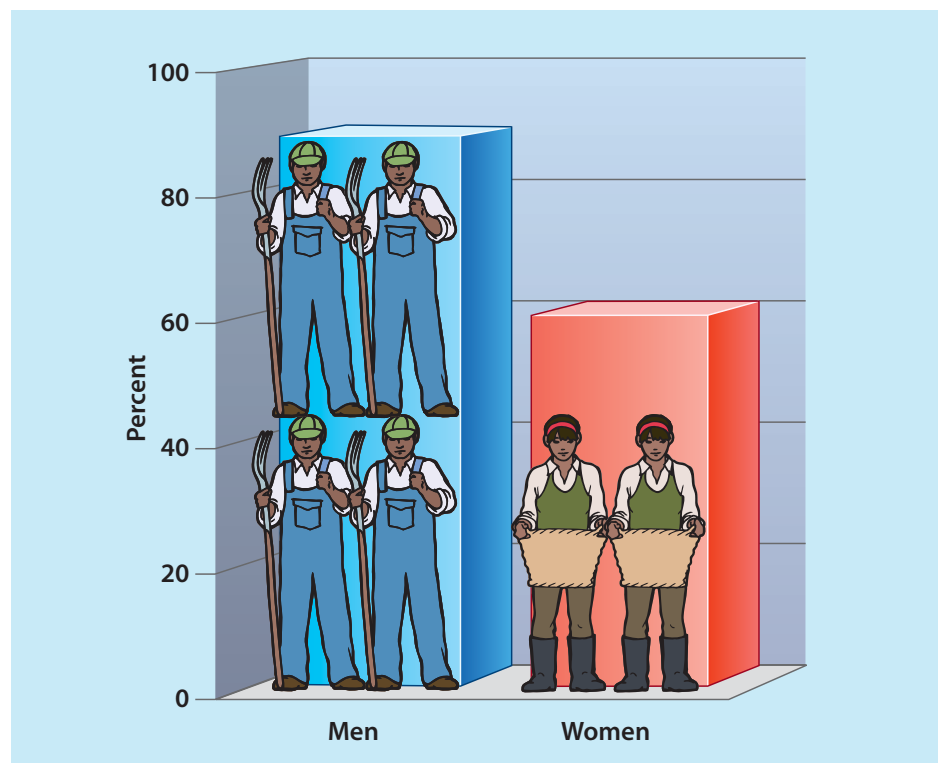


Fig. 19.2 A pictogram

- **Venn diagrams** are useful when you want to show how groups overlap (Fig. 19.3).

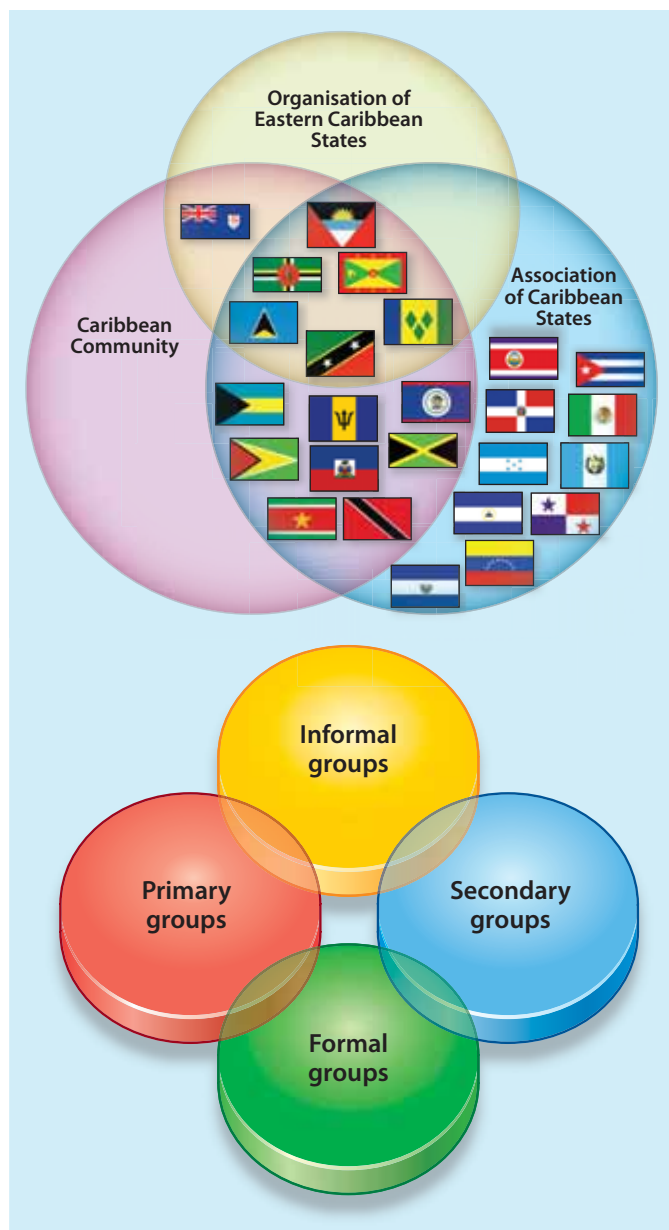


Fig. 19.3 Venn diagrams

- **Flow charts** illustrate a process or the system of cause and effect involved in it. The classic flow chart uses a number of boxes and arrows going in different directions to show choices and their consequences. However, some flow diagrams are very simple like Fig. 18.1.
- **Organising diagrams** include star diagrams, web diagrams and mind maps, and are used to show simple concepts, terms or items which all relate to a single idea (which is placed in the centre).

- **Other diagrams** use combinations of arrows, lines and boxes or circles, including cloud, tree, chain, continuum and cycle diagrams. You can be creative and invent your own version of any of these to help you present research data. Matrices, T-charts (a type of table) and Y-charts (Fig. 19.4) are also useful for presenting and organising **verbal data**.

Verbal data describes information given in words rather than in figures, which is particularly useful for qualitative research.

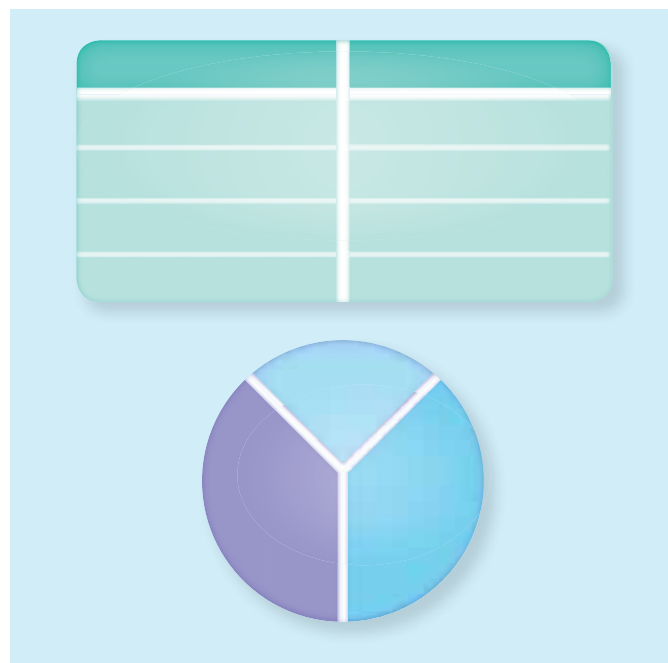


Fig. 19.4 Templates for T-charts and Y-charts

ACTIVITY 19.1

- Find these diagrams in the earlier chapters of this book:
 Fig. 2.2 Fig. 3.4 Fig. 4.2 Fig. 5.22
 Fig. 7.1 Fig. 8.10 Fig. 11.4 Fig. 16.6
- For each carry out the following:
 - Categorise the diagram in terms of the type of graphic organiser it is.
 - Decide why it was chosen to present the data included.
- The following tables show a variety of statistics: Table 5.2; Table 9.2; Table 9.3; Table 10.1.
 - Decide which type of graph or chart would most usefully illustrate them in a report.
 - Describe any difficulties you foresee about creating a graphic organiser to illustrate the data.

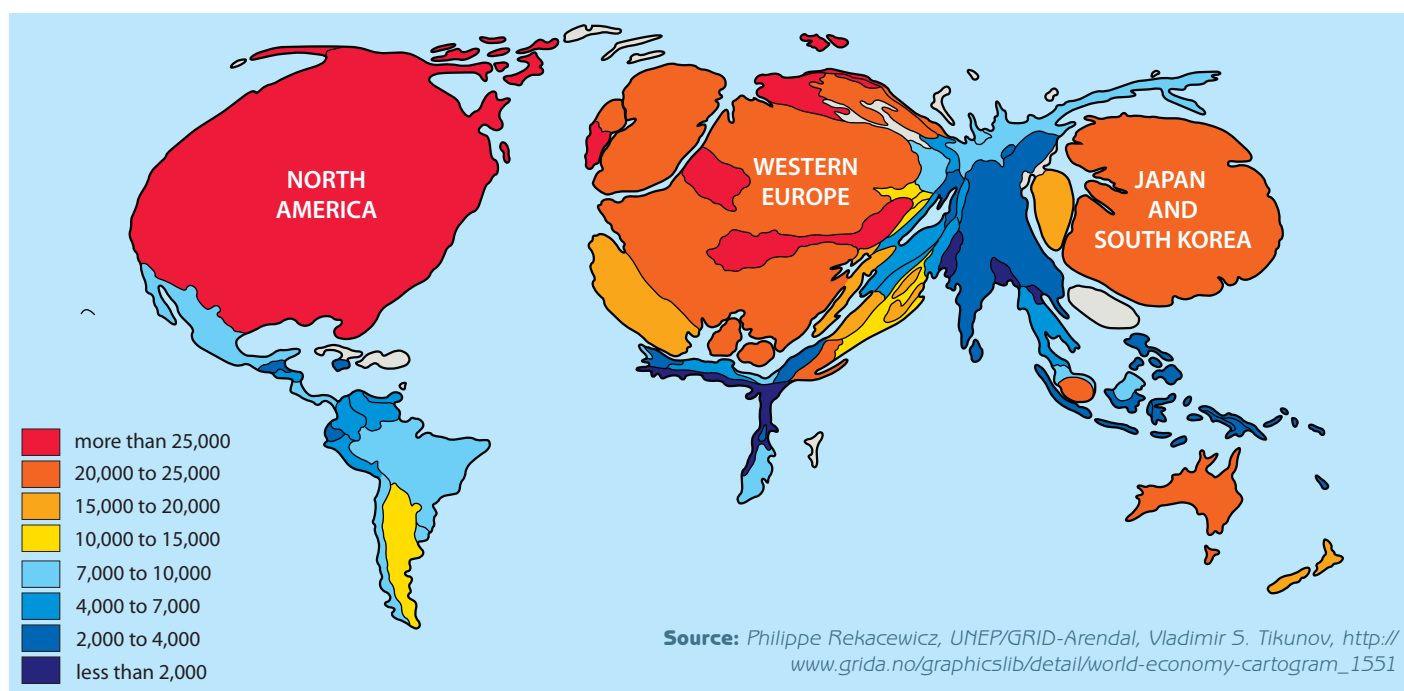


Fig. 19.5 Cartogram showing the world in terms of relative wealth (GDP per capita [US\$], 2000)

Maps

These are rather less likely than diagrams to be useful in presenting your research data. However, they may come in handy for some types of research. For example, if you were doing research on a geographical or historical project, a map may be much better than a text description for presenting, or even just illustrating, the information being presented.

- For a study on climate change in the Eastern Caribbean or the Greater Antilles, especially with a historical dimension, you could present maps showing rising temperatures or changing patterns of wind and rainfall across the subregion in question.
- Changes in land use or population density/distribution over time would also be much more graphically presented using maps than using words.
- Tourism venues or cruise-ship ports or routes could be clearly shown using a map.

It is possible to combine maps with diagrams for the same group of findings. There are also *cartograms*, which present social data by distorting the actual geographical map (see Fig. 19.5). They show the size of the country according to its score on a wide-ranging set of data. In the cartogram showing GDP or average wealth in dollars, the United States, Canada and the UK are shown much larger than their actual geographical size.

◆ On a cartogram showing poverty in the American continent, on any of the relevant indicators how would you expect the island of Hispaniola to look compared to the North American countries?

19.1.3 Text

Most research reports, especially qualitative studies, whether they are official government-commissioned documents or students' school-based assignments at CSEC or CAPE level, are heavily dependent on the written word. Text introduces other types of presentation such as tables, charts, graphs and maps, and develops the 'angle' or argument which the writer wants to put forward so as to persuade the reader to his or her point of view.

In qualitative research, text is what the researcher has to present, analyse and report on the data. Writers manipulate text in many ways to illustrate the data just as quantitative researchers use a variety of graphical forms to present numerical data. In much of qualitative research today, the author's or researcher's voice is deliberately interwoven with the other 'voices' of the participants in the form of verbatim excerpts. The qualitative researcher employs 'thick description' to portray participants and the context as well as events, cultural practices and social life.

Deliberate use is made of different genres of writing styles to enliven the report and to better convey the lived experiences of participants. In many instances metaphors bring out the essence of a phenomenon more efficiently than descriptive language. For example, students who are doing qualitative research for the first time often liken it to a journey with so many obstacles and blind corners that they need their ‘hands held’ by a guide, to keep them ‘on an even keel’ and make a ‘safe passage’.

Qualitative researchers create a narrative as a means of presenting and analysing the data. The different textual styles and formats help to break up the smooth, bland flow of the conventional monologue or author’s voice. The writing sometimes uses dramatic and evocative language so as to draw the reader in.

Below is an excerpt from a qualitative research report:

All through secondary school the emphasis was on coverage and testing. The fact that the majority of the students had minimal literacy and numeracy skills took second place. Thus, at all levels in the school system the students were permanently at a disadvantage which was accumulative.

Students became an object to themselves where ability was concerned probably in a more disquieting way than at an earlier time of their lives, when the Common Entrance Examination results were announced. After, their academic record served to further entrench the notion that they did not have what it took to make a success of secondary school. The ‘social’ self developed around cues, messages and signals emanating from the teachers and students in classroom interaction which had a hard, unwavering core relating to ability, achievement and assessment.

19.2

Analysing the data

Data analysis involves two processes.

- The first requires that the researcher thinks hard about what data have been collected, reading or examining the information several times. The researcher thinks about this information in relation to the research questions and how it can be organised to show its relevance to them. He or she experiments with classifying and categorising the responses from the respondents in various ways, and considers whether there are comparisons to be made.
- The second step is to present the range of data collected in a research report and this varies according to the approach to research adopted.

Mainstream social science research places more emphasis on the collection of survey data than other approaches and tends to use a large sample. Since much of the information collected can be quantified, this approach to research normally uses quantitative methods of data analysis where the data are organised and presented in the form of tables and statistical diagrams. The latter include all types of graphs – pie charts, horizontal and vertical bar graphs, population pyramids and line graphs – as well as flow diagrams and maps showing quantitative data (see §19.1, and also Box 19.4, pages 452–4). When analysing statistics, care must be taken not to introduce error or numerical bias (see Box 19.1).

In quantitative studies the ‘Presentation of Findings’ uses little text or discussion of issues. In such studies the following section is described as ‘Interpretation of Findings’, where the researcher indicates what the findings mean – for example, in relation to the research questions and the research problem. This is continued in a further section entitled ‘Discussion’, where the implications of the findings and a wider range of issues are discussed, including the comparison of the findings with those studies cited in the literature review.

In alternative and radical approaches to research (qualitative studies), where the data are mainly in the form of text (from interviews, observations, diaries and field notes), data analysis is somewhat different. It consists of reading the information, organising chunks of it into categories or themes which seem to relate to the research questions and looking for recurring or new themes. This is described as *qualitative data analysis* (see Box 19.2, page 450).

In a qualitative study, once the researcher begins to present the data (in descriptive and analytic statements, through the verbatim words of the participants, in vignettes, narratives or stories), data interpretation also occurs – in this mode ‘presentation’ cannot occur without ‘interpretation’. As a result, discussion and implications are also tied up with the stories and portrayals which the researcher is seeking to present.

The organisation of a qualitative research report differs significantly from a quantitative study where the findings are concerned. The procedure known as *coding* is useful for this type of research. Coding involves reading each line of a transcript to discover anything which may be useful. Anything you think is significant is then highlighted and assigned a code in the margin, which is useful for categorisation at a later stage (Box 19.5, page 456, contains an example of this). Colour coding may also be used.

BOX 19.1 Statistical analysis

Researchers should be aware of the complex technical or mathematical aspects of statistics which ensure accuracy. In social science or humanities research it is improbable that you will need to use any very complicated mathematics, unless you include a statistical model in your report, but it is important to understand the basics, so that you can use statistics confidently and correctly.

Variation

When data vary according to a consistent pattern, this can give us clues as to what is causing the variation.

Standard deviation

There is always some variation between a sample and the whole population, and statisticians use a concept known as *standard deviation* to make sure that such variations are not significant. Standard deviation measures the spread of data against the *mean* (average). The more widely spread the data, the more careful the statistician needs to be in handling them, especially when using a small sample. A large spread of data means that the mean is less representative of individual responses than it is when there is only a small spread, and this is where a large sample is useful.

Modelling

Researchers may use the data they have collected to build up a **model** or theory about the subject or

issue they are researching. However, models are only accurate if the data are also accurate, and also if the assumptions behind them are correct. Models, even when run on computers, are only as good as the data which were used to create them. And however hard the researcher works, data will always be liable to contain some errors, especially when the *raw data* have been used to create a model. If inaccurate data, or an incorrect assumption, lie behind a model, then the model will exaggerate the data or even misinterpret them completely. For example, climate change models produced in the 1960s, after a period of thirty years or so of cooler conditions, suggested that the Earth's climate might be moving towards another Ice Age. Forty years later, climate change models using computers to take into account many variables began to suggest that the climate was warming up quite quickly and was likely to continue to do so at least in the foreseeable future, a view of the matter which is still the prevalent one among climatologists today. Only the hindsight available to historians, however, will enable climatologists to be *certain* which of these scenarios is correctly interpreting the data available.

A **model** explains the research data and is sometimes used to predict similar data in another study.

19.3**Conclusions and recommendations**

After the data have been presented, interpreted and discussed, the researchers summarise the main findings and their implications and state how those findings relate to the studies already done on this problem. For example, the findings may disagree with or support previous work or extend the knowledge gained by these earlier studies. The study may also suggest lines for further research by other researchers to deepen our knowledge of this phenomenon. At this point the researchers could mention some factors considered to be limitations of the study. For example:

- the sample might have been small;
- a significant population might have been left out which could have impacted differently on the findings (those of a certain age, socioeconomic group or occupation);
- data collection might have taken place over a short period, where time may have mattered to the outcome of the study; for example, in a study of traffic congestion conducted during the month of September there could have been quite different findings if the data collection period had extended to Christmas.

The conclusion ends with some recommendations which the researcher believes are appropriate and could have a significant impact on the problem, but the recommendations must be related to what the study revealed about the problem.

BOX 19.2

Qualitative data analysis

The qualitative researcher is faced with a great deal of text data. The first step is to reduce this data in ways which may uncover trends and important insights.

- *Data reduction* may involve the researcher in attempting to tabulate data (see diagram below) or in drawing diagrams to show flow and processes, as well as in assigning codes so that the data could be organised via themes and categories. Data reduction, then, is part of data organisation.
- *Coding* is how data analysis is done in qualitative research. In coding a transcript, the researcher is looking for information which relates directly to the research questions. She or he may come across large chunks of data relating to a research question and code it identically wherever it occurs across different transcripts. These are *descriptive codes* and closely resemble the raw data.

It is often said that the qualitative researcher must become *immersed* in the data – read the data over and over for some time – and then it is quite likely that nuances would emerge involving the creation of subcategories or themes. Here the researcher is taking on the role of being the *instrument* of data analysis – it is his or her ability to reflect meaningfully on the data and mull over any interrelationships which is likely to push the analysis in certain directions. Novice researchers may find this daunting because it is a challenge for a researcher to rise above initial biases and theories to let the data speak freely. In qualitative inquiry, the stage is set for the data to emerge.

In contrast to mainstream research, qualitative research is *iterative* – the researcher can go back in the field and collect data along the lines which seem to be emerging from the data analysis process or he or she can recode transcripts with new insights based on emerging lines of analysis. As the researcher develops a better understanding of the context and participants, he or she may even return to the original research questions and adjust them so that more meaningful questions are now asked based on a deeper knowledge of the site. When the researcher has insights about motives and possible explanations of behaviour, she or he will now be using *inferential codes* – the researcher at this point is imposing certain ideas and interpretations on the data.

Many find it exciting as they discover that the original codes will become more finely tuned as the researcher tries to capture as much commonality and variation as possible within an all-embracing code. In so doing the researcher is attempting to faithfully render what human experience and behaviour is like. When the transcripts are fully coded, the researcher looks at common codes across all transcripts and builds a theory or an explanation attempting to answer the research questions. There is no set of facts or empirical data to depend on; instead the study is usually based on perceptions or experiences. However, the process becomes rigorous and systematic when the researcher builds alternative theories and explanations and ‘tests’ them against the data seeking a better ‘fit’.

Fig. 19.6 below represents in a schematic way how the data pertaining to one type of school were organised for analysis. This procedure was undertaken in the same way for the other school types. Boys and girls in each school type were analysed separately.

(A) Prestige, single-sex schools	(1) What are they learning about themselves?	(2) What are they learning about relating to others?	(3) What are they learning about the school’s assessment of gender relations?	(4) How are they learning this?
(a) girls				
(b) boys				

Fig. 19.6 Schema for data analysis

19.3.2 The appendix

The final section of a research study is the appendix, though not all studies will have one. Additional information which is pertinent to the study is included in the appendix. In a study of river pollution, for example, a map of the parts of the river studied is directly relevant to the substance of the research topic and should be included in the text. A map showing the location of the entire river within the region or country is also relevant, but less so, and could be safely included in the appendix. Such a map provides background or context for the study. It is often the case that data are included in appendices which are considered too detailed for the main text. Appendices are usually labelled by a letter, as 'Appendix A', 'Appendix B', and so on.

19.4 References

An important aspect of scholarly work is the list of references at the end of the study. This serves several purposes. It gives readers as much information as possible on various texts and articles consulted and cited so that they will be able to source the same material if they wish. The materials read by the researcher inform readers whether the study is based on wide or limited reading on the topic and whether a variety of references was used. This could be just for information purposes but it is also important in evaluating the study, always remembering that some topics may be difficult to source in a variety of media (for example, pollution around dump sites in the Caribbean, the incidence of diabetes in ethnic communities in the Caribbean, and so on). The most important reason, however, for citing the works used is to acknowledge the authors and their ideas and thus avoid the charge of plagiarism (see Chapter 20).

Various styles are used in scholarly works to organise the reference list, one common one being that of the American Psychological Association (the APA system; see Box 19.3). There is sometimes confusion as to whether 'references' or 'bibliography' is the correct term for this list. Normally 'bibliography' includes works which were consulted as background and extended or further reading, while the list of 'references' includes only those texts or sources which are specifically mentioned in the paper. The APA also gives guidelines on quoting and citing other persons' works within the text.

SUMMARY

The final sections of a research report include the 'Conclusion', 'Recommendations' (if any), 'References' and the 'Appendix'. The conclusion and recommendations must relate directly to the research problem, the research questions, the literature reviewed and the findings. The appendix is useful in that related material can be placed there which would be too bulky within the study, especially if it is not critical information for that section. The list of references is standard practice for all scholarly work and great care should be taken to use a particular citation style correctly. The references give the reader valuable information about related materials and show that the writer has been informed by a range of sources. In addition, citing references shows that the writer is careful to acknowledge the sources of his or her ideas and statements, thereby safeguarding the intellectual property of others.

19.5 Some examples of research studies

In this section we look at two different examples of actual research studies, one quantitative (mainstream research) study and one qualitative.

ACTIVITY 19.2

1. If you had to investigate the problem in Box 19.4 using a qualitative study, identify THREE aspects of the study that would change and describe these changes.
2. List THREE characteristics of a Literature Review evident in Box 19.4.
3. Code the excerpt in Fig. 19.10 (page 457) according to ideas that seem important to you. Compare your coding with that of a classmate. What insights do you gather about the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research?

BOX 19.3 Conventions of the APA style

Referring to works in text

- If you are citing a work by summarising it or making a reference to it without actually quoting it, give the author and date of publication within the sentence, in brackets, e.g. (Johnson, 2007).
- If you are quoting the author's words, the page number is added, e.g. (Johnson, 2007, p 2). If the work is an electronic source where page numbers may not be given, refer to the paragraph, e.g. (Johnson, 2007, ¶ 2). The symbol ¶ is used for 'paragraph'.
- If there are three or more authors, include all their names and the date of publication, e.g. (Grey, Baylor, Messiah, & Jones, 2006) the first time the work is cited and subsequently use (Grey et al., 2006).

The reference list

The list of references is placed after the text but before any appendices and has the following style characteristics:

- It is arranged alphabetically.
- The authors' surnames are placed first, followed by the date of publication.
- The place of publication is placed before the publisher.
- Italics are used for the names of books and journals.
- For electronic works as much information as possible should be provided (e.g. author's name,

date of publication, date of retrieval, title of the document and the web address or URL – uniform resource locator).

The following examples show the punctuation and styles used for different types of work.

- **Book, one author:** Fay, B. (1996). *Contemporary philosophy of social science*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- **Organisation as author:** Caribbean Examinations Council. (1999). *Social studies syllabus effective for teaching from September 2000 and for examinations from May/June 2002*. St. Michael, Barbados: Author.
- **Three authors:** Dynneson, T.L., Gross, R.E., & Berson, M.J. (2003). *Designing effective instruction for secondary social studies* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- **Journal article:** Garratt, D., & Piper, H. (2003). Citizenship education and the monarchy: examining the contradictions. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 51(2), 128–148.
- **Edited book:** Farganis, J. (Ed.). (2000). *Readings in social theory: The classic tradition to post-modernism* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.
- **Internet source:** Collins-Kreiner, N. (2005). Maps and meaning: Reading the map of the holy land. *The Qualitative Report*, 10(2), 257–275. Retrieved (9 May 2014) from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR10-2/collins-kreiner>

BOX 19.4 An example of a mainstream or quantitative study 2007

Introduction

The influence of television on youth, particularly cable television and the foreign mass media, has been widely reported in the press and various scholarly studies. They portray television as a major force in youth socialisation, predisposing them to violence, aggression and anti-social behaviours. This study conducted locally is an attempt to compare the habits and attitudes of a small cross section of Caribbean youth with what is reported in the international literature. The purpose of this study is to assess the general orientation of youth to the media and to determine whether this orientation is helpful in the human development of Caribbean youth.

Research topic/problem

Television and its influences on youth.

Research objectives

1. To examine the television viewing habits of young people and their attitudes to television programming.
2. To explore the nature of television programming which would help in the human development potential of youth.

Problem statement

Young people are seemingly susceptible to the violence and aggression portrayed on television.

BOX 19.4

An example of a mainstream or quantitative study 2007 (continued)

This study investigates the habits and attitudes of youth to television programmes in the Happy Valley community.

Research questions

1. How often do young people look at television?
2. What are their favourite television programmes?
3. Why do they watch these shows?
4. What are their views on television programming?

Literature review

The international literature shows that more young people in the world watch television than listen to the radio, read newspapers or use the Internet. For youth, then, it is the dominant form of the mass media. Gigli (2004) says that 'average daily use of television among school-age children around the world with access ranges from between 1.5 hours to more than 4 hours' (p 2). For small developing nations, then, what is actually purveyed on television screens becomes extremely important as they constitute a major socialisation agency for our young people.

Commentary by Caribbean health professionals deplores the ways in which violence is constantly showcased on television – both in local news programming and in the entertainment fare provided by cable television (Brown, 2005). In a society where violence is a major part of daily life and entertainment, organisations such as PAHO fear that our youth will be influenced to become violent, aggressive and anti-social. In the Caribbean, mental health experts extend this concern to a constant feeling of fear, especially of youth in inner city areas, and a lack of sensitivity displayed by the media to victims of violence (Robinson, 2005).

There are relatively few studies on how young people actually assess their television viewing and the programmes they tend to watch. Is it because they have few choices or they actually like to watch violence and anti-social themes? UNICEF (2004) has undertaken focus group interviews with young people across the globe in an effort to gather data on this issue, and it is interesting that while the rest of the population feel that the media showcases youth more than others, young people feel that the media stereotype them and portray them negatively.

The present study is located within this body of international research data and presents survey data of a cross section of youth in a Caribbean community. It adds to the growing body of work on youth and the challenges and possibilities in the Caribbean, as few studies have yet been

undertaken specifically on youth and television with an emphasis on their assessment of the medium. While survey data provide only a 'snapshot', this study could be extended by researchers in the future to conduct qualitative studies to unearth more in-depth perspectives.

References

- Brown, V. (2005). *Violence, media and health: I shot the sheriff*. Barbados: Commonwealth Broadcasting Association.
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- Robinson, C. (2005). *The media and victims of violence*. Jamaica Observer, 13 February.
- UNICEF. (2004). *Opinion polls: What young people think. Summary of polls in East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean*. Retrieved November 21, 2014 from <http://www.unicef.org/polls>

Data collection

Thirty students (15 girls and 15 boys) were chosen by stratified random sample from the Happy Valley Community School from forms 1 to 5. They were approached individually and asked whether they would like to participate in the study. All agreed. The researcher then obtained permission from their parents and the school's principal to conduct the study. A five-item questionnaire was administered to all students on one day after school. Three items were of the forced-choice type and two were open-ended. (The instrument is included in Fig. 19.7 on page 454.)

Data analysis

1. Presentation of findings

Figure 19.7 shows that most students in the sample watched on average 1 to 2 hours of television every day. And a significant number watched 3 to 4 hours daily. Figure 19.8 shows that most students watch music videos, black entertainment programmes and movies. Only some are interested in cartoons and foreign news. There was no mention of documentaries, local television programming, travel, soap operas, sports, business or technology.

Table 19.1 on page 455 tabulates the reasons which students offer about their television viewing preferences. Table 19.2 illustrates what characteristics students would like to see in new television programming.

BOX 19.4

An example of a mainstream or quantitative study 2007 (continued)

This questionnaire is designed to elicit data on youth and television viewing. There are no right and wrong answers – all information is welcome. Your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence and the questionnaire is anonymous

☐ M ☐ F

1. How many hours of television do you estimate that you watch every day?

(a) 30 minutes	(b) 1-2 hours
(c) 3-4 hours	(d) more than 5 hours
2. Which day of the week do you watch more television than other days?

(a) Fridays	(b) Saturdays	(c) Sundays	(d) more than 5 hours
-------------	---------------	-------------	-----------------------
3. Rank your 4 favourite television programmes by preference.

(a) _____	(c) _____
(b) _____	(d) _____
4. Give ONE reason why you like to watch EACH programme:

(a) _____	_____
(b) _____	_____
(c) _____	_____
(d) _____	_____
5. What kinds of programming would you like to see more of on television and give your reasons?

(a) _____	_____
(b) _____	_____
(c) _____	_____
(d) _____	_____

Fig.19.7 Research instrument used in the study

2. Data interpretation

The data show that the youth at Happy Valley community demonstrate similar television viewing habits to those internationally. Figure 19.8 indicates that most youth watch 1–2 hours of television daily and some many more hours than that. Only a minority of students watch less than one hour of television a week. Their major interests were music videos and black entertainment programmes (Figure 19.8); surprisingly, movies were not so highly regarded, perhaps because many are re-runs and follow similar or even identical themes. Table 19.1 illustrates that young people seem to appreciate the emphasis on youth culture in music videos and other kinds of programming in black entertainment on the US cable networks. It is possible that they see scope to imitate or try certain fashions shown on these programmes and use this medium to be informed about youth culture, particularly about music worldwide, and especially in the US. At the same time, some of them see elements that focus on the kinds of knowledge which could be obtained from watching these types of programmes; that it was not only for entertainment but for information

as well, especially for those for whom music is a hobby. Table 19.2 indicates that young people are not necessarily 'tied' to the types of programmes they watch now but could assess their worth and identify 'gaps' which are at present inhibiting the development of young people.

3. Discussion of findings

Since television is a daily phenomenon in the lives of youth, we must agree with Gigli (2004) that it performs a major socialisation function. While youth seem to be uncritical of the violence portrayed in music videos, movies and even cartoons, it is quite possible that they are not aware how it may contribute to mental health problems, as was suggested by Brown (2005). Thus, it is heartening to see that given a choice they would not be so wrapped up in the kinds of programmes they are criticised for watching and would look for those which are more uplifting for youth. However, youth do not design and create media; that is done by metropolitan countries and disseminated worldwide, endeavouring to incorporate all youth into similar lifestyles and attitudes based on the US model. While the students in this study did not criticise the dominant US focus on television programming, they did call for a more enlightened view of youth on television, meaning that the present programmes tend to be what adults think youth want to see. This study, then, supports the view that more young people should be involved in developing programmes for youth in whatever ways they may be able to contribute.

Conclusion

This community of students in the Caribbean demonstrates similar television viewing habits and attitudes to youth worldwide. It therefore supports studies done on this problem before. However, it goes further by suggesting that youth have certain viewing preferences because they have to choose from programming which seems to be similarly flawed. As a result they choose those programmes which seem to be created for youth but the ideas about youth are from an adult's perspective. While young people have been able to penetrate this state of affairs, they do not seem to be as concerned about the lack of Caribbean content in television programming.

This study is limited by the small sample size and so the results cannot be generalised to a wider body of students, but certainly it presents ideas which could be built on by a larger-scale study. One finding which other researchers may want to pursue is the lack of criticism about the dominance of the US media in the Caribbean and the dearth of locally produced programmes.

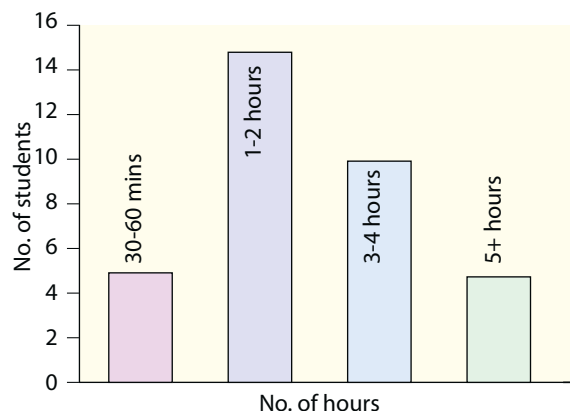
BOX 19.4**An example of a mainstream or quantitative study 2007 (continued)**

Fig. 19.8 Television viewing by youth

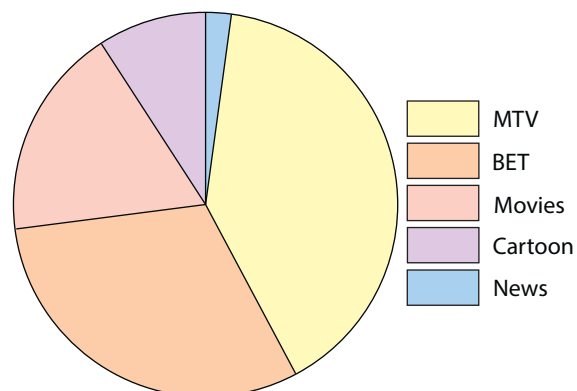


Fig. 19.9 Pie graph showing television programming preferences

Table 19.1 Characteristics of good programming

NUMBER OF STUDENTS	TELEVISION PROGRAMMES	REASONS FOR VIEWING
9	Music videos	Highly entertaining, visual content, youth culture
8	Music videos	Information on music, singers, entertainment industry, trends over time
7	BET	Entertaining, sexuality content, fashion, styles
3	Movies	Action movies, fighting, weapons technology
1	Movies	The storyline, interesting characters, morals
1	Cartoons	Relaxation, funny
1	Cartoons	Everything in adult movies can be found in cartoons

Table 19.2 Television of the future

NUMBER OF STUDENTS	WHAT TELEVISION PROGRAMMES SHOULD BE LIKE
13	More realistic shows about ordinary people's lives
10	More 'serious' issues but presented in a less 'talking down' manner
5	More on youth in different parts of the world
1	More on youth in news, not just sensational bits but about their achievements and challenged
1	More on youth programmes where youth are not only showcased but youth are involved with the directors, producers and creative personnel

BOX 19.5 A qualitative study

Qualitative studies tend to use only a few participants so that it is possible for you to conduct such a study with the minimum of inconvenience. You would not have to construct and administer questionnaires to a large sample, for example. However, when it comes to analysing the data it could get tedious as you can collect a lot of data through conversational interviews. The study outlined below may encourage you to try what is still an alternative approach to research. Although the whole study is outlined, emphasis is placed on data analysis procedures in qualitative research.

Research problem

The apparent loss of cultural knowledge in Caribbean society today about herbs and other plants. (Here you may choose any topic which you are interested in – music, dance, languages, culinary practices, technologies, and so on.)

Research objectives

To explore the knowledge which older people have about herbs and plants and assess how that knowledge is used today.

Problem statement

The cultural knowledge which older persons possess is in danger of dying out with them. This study seeks to investigate whether the cultural knowledge which older persons possess about herbs and plants proves useful in everyday life.

Research questions

1. What knowledge do older persons possess about herbs and other plants?
2. Do they use that knowledge in any way?
3. What factors hinder or encourage the use of this cultural knowledge?

Literature review

This may be a difficult area to source previous studies. In such a case you would look for general themes – for example, studies about cultural erasure, cultural loss, modernisation, urban living, alternative healing practices in the Caribbean and the importance of herbs in Caribbean cuisine. Also of relevance is the status of older people in the society and how younger people assess their knowledge. You may want to look at studies of other societies where plants and herbs for cooking and healing are part of the traditional knowledge store and are still used today in their households – for example, the Amerindian groups in the Caribbean or indigenous peoples elsewhere.

Data collection

Your sample may consist of five or six persons aged perhaps 60 years and older, but you may want to seek a distinction between rural and urban living by interviewing some in the country and some in the town. Long conversational interviews which you audio tape are perhaps the best method of data collection here. (However, the longer the interview the more typing will have to be done to convert the oral information on the tape to a typed transcript which is more suitable for data analysis.) It is a good idea to have a list of areas which you are interested in to keep the interview focused, but the participants should be able to speak freely on the topics they want to discuss. Some possibilities are:

- 'When you were growing up did you learn a lot about how to use plants for medicines, say?'
- 'Nowadays people go to the pharmacy for everything; what alternatives were used when you were growing up?'
- 'Do you teach your children and grandchildren these things?'
- 'Out of all this knowledge you have, what do you actually use today?'

Data analysis

The typed transcripts of the interviews are used to analyse the data. Make several copies. Leave a wide margin on the right to write in themes you detect in the data (Fig. 19.10). Read and re-read the transcripts several times to get a 'feel' for the different lines of analysis which may be emerging. On a separate piece of paper jot down the ideas you have about themes in the data, using one word or as few words as possible. These themes will be used to code the data. Read each transcript again and where the data may be saying something close to one of the themes you identified, note that in the wide right-hand margin. For example, if the interviewee is saying something about using herbs to cook, you could code that information as 'cook', but the person may be more specific, as there are several processes involved in food preparation (e.g. preserving), so that codes and subcodes could be identified.

The following codes may or may not be detected in each transcript. They identify parts of the text where the interviewee may be speaking generally of using herbs in cooking and more specifically to cure or preserve meats, to add unique flavours to food, to create rich colour or to enhance its appearance.

Code/ subcode:	cook/cure	cook/taste
	cook/colour	cook/garnish

BOX 19.5 A qualitative study (continued)**Lucilla, p. 3**

R: Yes. We used to use so much different thing for cold dat doctors today don't even know bout. We used to boil Christmas Bush and add a lil sugar, yes man, and dat used to go down with no problem man. And it have a thing call vervine when your blood get hot and it need to cool and calm down – ah tell you doctors today only know about Buckleys! And if yuh look good Buckleys must have some ah dat same Christmas Bush...

criticism of scientific medicine [critic-doc]

And you know in dem times marijuana, we used to use it for the wheezing. You take the leaf and make tea and dat real good for the asthma, people swear by dat. But what you think? Today dat same herb is illegal and you have to go buy medicine from foreign ...

*medical use [med-cold]
med-asth
critic-law*

Fig. 19.10 Qualitative data analysis

The excerpt from an interview transcript in Fig. 19.10 has been coded by the researcher. It brings up ideas about criticism of the present state of health knowledge among the professionals in the society – doctors and the legal profession. It suggests that sidelining bush medicines involved us in a heavy import bill from western countries and the unwillingness to see the medicinal value in marijuana also involves us in medical imports from the West. The researcher has used codes to include both types of criticisms and information on the medical use of herbs for two ailments. Reading over the transcript at another time the researcher may 'see' more ideas which link up to those expressed by other respondents.

Findings

This is an example of the different formats which can be used in writing up a qualitative study and how presentation, interpretation and discussion interweave. In your version there would not be any headings like those below; it should flow as a narrative. The headings have been put in to alert you to the different voices and devices used in writing up a qualitative study.

The author's voice

Three of the participants lived in rural areas, two females and one male. They had extensive knowledge about herbs and plants for medicinal and culinary use and were eager to share this information. They came from the same general area and were all over 70 years of age. Their knowledge of herbs and plants was passed on from their parents and grandparents and they too in turn taught their children and grandchildren. As children and for most of their adult life they regularly used 'bush medicine' and even now they seldom visit a doctor. Only the male participant had

had an operation. On the whole they felt that the younger members of the family did know about the different plants and what they could be used for but they tended to only use what was in the immediate vicinity, they did not know where to go to look for all the other types of plants.

Verbatim voice of participants

R1: You see all around here we have a lot of shining bush and sweet broom and de children mother does bathe dem in sweet broom to get rid of skin rash and those kind of things but only down by the river over yonder it have a lot of wormgrass and watergrass good for cooling and cleaning the body but they don't go for it. If I don't go for it, dem never go. Dem buy medicine in the pharmacy and spend a heap ah good money when dey could just pick it!

Thick description – details

The participants in town lived with their families. All were female. One spoke of how she grew up in the country and had learned bush medicine from her mother. She described how the aloe plant was used for different purposes.

R4. De first thing you have to do when you cut the aloes is make sure you get a long piece dat full of the goodness in it, dat oozing out so to speak. You could put it just so on burns. It will cool the skin and you can just paste it on and in no time at all your skin back to good, good. If you get a cut too. And you can peel it and put it in the fridge in a jug of water and you can drink that instead of water just to cool and clean your insides.

The author's voice is interspersed throughout the account, telling the reader what has been found, interpreting and discussing it. The participants' voices are also interspersed throughout, where the author selects verbatim excerpts from the

BOX 19.5 A qualitative study (Continued)

interview transcript to illustrate a point. 'Thick description' is used in qualitative studies to deepen an understanding of the context. In the case above it is a participant giving some details but the author could also decide to describe each participant in detail and their home situation to give the reader a 'feel' for the context. Other forms of text which could be used are stories and vignettes (brief portrayals, for example of one of the participants and his or her story).

Interweaving of description, interpretation and discussion

While the participants criticised the younger members of the family, especially those in town, for abandoning the merits of bush medicine for the pharmacy, they were not sure sometimes about dosage and side effects. They felt that the younger members only put up objections like that because they had a prejudice about 'old-time ways'. The older people were unwilling to see the side of the

argument that lack of standards in brewing the herbs could be dangerous for the patient. They tended to rely on tried and tested practice, even though nothing was written down. In this situation age-old cultural knowledge is being lost – older people are not documenting what they know, as they feel that it is the duty of the younger members to preserve and carry on traditions, and the younger members tend to be suspicious of cures which you can go outside and pick. They are being influenced by modern urban living and tend to feel that medicines should be issued by qualified people and come in a bottle with recommended doses. Between these two positions the cultural knowledge of the older heads is being steadily whittled down through lack of use. In the meantime, western medicine is becoming the norm despite all the fears about over-the-counter drugs, overprescribing of drugs to inflate the income of the drug companies and the medicalisation of minor ailments.

**Wrap Up**

Data analysis varies according to the type of research project carried out. Mainstream research based largely on survey data is analysed using a range of quantitative techniques and presented as statistical graphs, diagrams and tables. These show trends and patterns in the data which are interpreted and discussed in subsequent sections of the research report. Alternative and radical approaches to research, relying mainly on interview and observational data (mostly text), are analysed by examining the statements or behaviours of persons

and looking for trends, patterns, areas of emphasis or things which are ignored. When data analysis is presented in a qualitative-type study, interpretation and discussion come immediately into play so there are no separate sections relating to findings, interpretation and discussion as in the reporting of mainstream research. In both types of research, ethical considerations at the stage of data analysis require the researcher to be true to the data and not concoct or manufacture relationships which are not present (see Chapter 20).

ACTIVITY 19.3

Revision: Inquiry skills

A summary of a research study (Fayombo, 2010) is given below. It used standardised instruments of data collection and secondary data as a major source of information. Please read through the description of the study and respond to the questions which follow.

Aim: To find out the gender differences in students' study habits, interest in school and attitudes towards substance abuse.

Note: As a tentative statement about what the outcome of the research will show about the relationship between two variables, a hypothesis is a testable statement and is sometimes phrased as the null hypothesis ('there is no relationship ... etc.'), where the researcher is postulating that any variation which occurs is due to random chance. This is the conventional format in the scientific method but note that the researcher's goal is to refute the null hypothesis and establish that there is a significant relationship. This will be revealed through statistical analysis of the data.

Selection: A random sample selected from four secondary schools in Barbados.

Sample: 210 students, between 14–18 years; 90 males and 120 females.

Methodology: The instruments used were:

- Students' Study Habit Scale (SSHS);
- Students' Interest in Schooling Scale (SISS);
- Attitudes Towards Substance Abuse Scale (ATSAS).

Note: These instruments require the respondent to rate the items given on a scale of 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-agree and 4-strongly agree. An example of an item is 'I review each subject regularly during the term to cover the syllabus' (SSHS). A score of 20–25 in SSHS and SISS indicates fairly good study habit and interest in schooling; a score of 26 and above indicates good study habit and interest in schooling. A score of 20 and above in ATSAS indicates favourable attitudes towards substance abuse, while a score of 19 and below indicates unfavourable attitudes towards substance abuse. These scales are standardised instruments which have been tested over time by their designers and other researchers and shown to have high reliability and validity. (High reliability means that the items on the scale seem to signify the same thing to different groups of students over time. High validity refers to tests where the items measure what they set out to measure.) In other words, there is very little variation in how each item is understood by the test takers.– e.g. that the SSHS only includes questions relating to students' study habits and not, say, their home background.

Literature Review: The researcher used a variety of secondary sources to unearth background data to develop the issues examined in the paper:

- *Thesis Findings:* Cumberbatch (1993) found significant gender differences in achievement in favour of girls in Barbados.
- *Journal Articles:* Kutnick (2000) reported that generally girls attained at higher levels in Barbados and St Vincent.
- *Current Data:* *The Caribbean Examiner* (2008) noted that girls were the highest achievers regionally in CSEC and CAPE.
- *Statistical Data:* The CSEC overall May to June 2008 registration patterns for Barbados show 36.18 per cent of males were registered as compared with 63.82 per cent of females (CXC Statistical Bulletin, 2008).
- *Reviews of Research:* Gallagher (1997). A review of research evidence in the apparent underachievement of boys.
- *Conference Presentations:* Ku (2008). *Gender differences in career aspirations among law students*. Paper presented at the AERA Annual Meeting, Sheraton, Boston.
- *Handbooks:* Planning, Research & Development Unit, Ministry of Education, Youth, Affairs & Culture. (2000). *Education in Barbados Information Handbook*.
- *Digests:* Planning, Research & Development Unit, Ministry of Education, Youth, Affairs & Sports. (2002). *Miniature digest of education statistics, 2001-2002*.
- *National Organizations:* Zickler (2000). *Gender differences in drug abuse risks and treatment*. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Notes.
- *Books:* Sommers (2001). *The war against boys: How misguided feminism is harming our men*.

Source: Fayombo, G.A. (2010). Gender differences in study habit, interest in schooling and attitude toward substance abuse among secondary adolescents in Barbados. *Caribbean Educational Research Journal*, 2(1), 87–95.

Questions

1. Why was a random sample used?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using already existing standardised instruments?
3. What kind of study is this likely to be – quantitative or qualitative?
4. If you were also investigating this issue, what additional forms of secondary data could you use?
5. What argument could the researcher put forward to justify the inclusion of studies from 1993 and 1997?
6. Suggest what may have been the outcomes of the study, namely what do you believe were the results of testing the null hypotheses?

To discover how close you were to the actual findings check the details of the literature review, and to satisfy your curiosity about other aspects of the investigation, please see the full report on the website for the Caribbean Educational Research Journal. (At <http://www.cavehill.uwi.edu/fhe/education/cerj/past-issues/cerj-vol2-no1.aspx>, accessed 23 September 2014.)

Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Distinguish between references and a bibliography. (2 marks)
(b) Describe the correct APA conventions for citing references within text. (4 marks)
- 2 (a) Explain the difference between a pie chart and a divided bar chart, using either words or pictures. (2 marks)
(b) Give ONE example of information you might use in each of these types of chart. (4 marks)
- 3 (a) Define a cartogram. (2 marks)
(b) Identify TWO types of data from a social science research project which could be shown on a cartogram. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) State whether quantitative or qualitative studies are more likely to use statistics. (1 mark)
(b) Explain the concept of standard deviation. (2 marks)
(c) Identify TWO problems which can be encountered with statistical variation across data and state how ONE can be addressed. (3 marks)
- 5 (a) Explain what is meant by coding in qualitative data analysis. (2 marks)
(b) Describe TWO ways in which effective coding may influence the findings of a qualitative study. (4 marks)
- 6 (a) Write a definition of the term 'raw data'. (2 marks)
(b) Outline TWO ways in which a researcher processes raw data. (4 marks)
- 7 (a) Explain the relationship between the main findings of a study and its research objectives. (2 marks)
(b) Outline TWO examples to illustrate your answer to part (a). (4 marks)
- 8 (a) Outline TWO differences in data collection methodology between humanities and social science research. (4 marks)
(b) Explain how ONE of these affects the data analysis and presentation. (2 marks)
- 9 (a) Describe TWO ways in which a quantitative social science study report might use tabular material. (4 marks)
(b) Explain how ONE of these might be illustrated using a graphic organiser. (2 marks)
- 10 (a) What is meant by the term 'iterative'? (2 marks)
(b) Explain TWO ways in which qualitative studies are iterative. (4 marks)

20

Principles of Ethical Conduct



Audio recording during a research study

Ethics refers to any method used or perspective held about deciding how to act in a given situation to uphold moral principles, rules and good behaviour. A research project is a complex situation often dealing with human subjects and the various stages of the research process all have to be properly managed. If at any point the methods, procedures and decisions made by the researcher are faulty in relation to the rules of best practice, then the findings become compromised, resulting in bad research.

Ethics pervades the entire research process, even in data analysis. It does not only concern people and how they are treated but also involves the researcher's commitment to rigour and systematic procedures throughout the research process. An ethical stance in data analysis requires that the researcher resists the temptation to impose his or her own assumptions when trying to understand the data.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing this chapter, you will be able to:

1. assess the ethical considerations which arise at each stage of an inquiry;
2. appreciate the ethical issues and dilemmas involved in systematic research;
3. respect the integrity of other scholars' research;
4. adhere to basic principles for maintaining ethical standards in conducting research.

20.1

Commitment to ethical research

From the very beginning of the research process, it is important to maintain an ethical stance throughout. This includes a commitment to:

- treating the respondents or participants as human beings deserving of respect (see Box 20.1);

- conducting the research in a truthful and trustworthy manner;
- respecting the work of other researchers.

As novice researchers, it is necessary that you understand why adhering to ethical norms is important. One of the main reasons is that if you do not observe procedures which allow for truth and avoiding error, then you will be fabricating results and misleading the public or the audience to whom this research is important.

BOX 20.1

Ethical practices and human subjects

There are increasingly stringent codes nowadays governing research practices with human subjects. At universities, as well as all the other committees which scrutinise a student's research proposal, a research ethics committee has to examine the proposal separately before it can be operationalised.

Ethical standards for research with human subjects depend on the idea that human beings have rights and those rights should be preserved during the research process. For example, **autonomy**

Autonomy refers to the independence of a person with regard to making decisions about the way they live.

is an important principle, so a person's independence should be acknowledged in the ways that the researcher conducts research.

For example, the research subject should have the right to withdraw at any point without any kind of consequences. Thus, before the project begins the researcher has to make it clear to the subject what provisions are being made to respect his or her rights to being an autonomous person.

All research in the social and medical sciences must seek the good of human beings. Every research project is carried out to improve life in some way. This is another principle, called **beneficence**, which refers to doing good or seeking good for people. By this principle, a researcher cannot allow a human subject to be harmed in any way, physically, emotionally or psychologically, so the research event must be a safe place for human subjects. In fact, research should redound to the benefit of the subjects as well as that of the researcher. Being mindful of this, a researcher will undertake to share the findings of the study with the subjects of the research so that they may become fully aware of the issue and what may be the solutions.

There are even more stringent rules associated with research among special or vulnerable populations – those persons whose autonomy may be impaired in some way, for example children, prisoners and those with mental incapacities. The rules upholding the ethical principle of beneficence become especially important here as these persons are at risk for being manipulated and exploited.

Further, if you steal people's ideas and their work and pass it off as yours, you are again involved in fraud and are misrepresenting yourself. Ethical procedures are put in place, then, to increase the accountability of researchers to those who read the reports, to those who may have to act on the findings and to those who fund research.

Ethical dilemmas most often occur in qualitative research, where you are dealing with real people and sensitive situations. Particularly in action research and participant observation, the researcher becomes identified with the group she or he is researching, and must be careful to maintain a mental distance if not a physical one.

The ethical approach begins with the researcher being sensitive to the needs and the context of persons.

1. **Gaining access to the site.** Proper channels must be followed in getting permission to study members of an organisation – a school, workplace, a group.
2. **Dealing with minors.** If students or children are involved in the study, permission must be sought from parents and guardians.
3. **Introducing the study to respondents.** The participants should be given enough information about the study so that they can make up their mind about participating.
4. **Collecting data.** There are several important ethical considerations here:
 - Whatever measures are used, the researcher should keep in mind that the information is confidential, and if it is to be disclosed, then that should be discussed with participants.
 - In collecting data the researcher must always treat participants with politeness and respect so that, if they do not wish to answer a particular question, then that wish is respected.
 - Permission should be sought from the interviewees if the session is to be audio-taped.
 - There should be strong justification for any unobtrusive or secretive measures.
5. **Leaving the site.** In some cases, especially where the research was conducted in an organisation, the researcher should give members who participated some indication of the findings of the study or a copy of it.

Other ethical considerations include:

- reducing bias as much as possible in collecting data, especially in alternative approaches where subjective data are important and the researcher is the 'instrument of data collection';
- keeping a paper trail of decisions made and analytic procedures used to support the data analysis;
- presenting findings without attempting to change or alter data given by the participants;

- reporting the findings truthfully and maintaining confidentiality when reporting.

20.2

Consent

One of the main principles of ethical research is what is known as *informed consent*. If you are carrying out qualitative research, your respondents, particularly if the data collection instrument is a personal or focus group interview, must give their consent to participation in the project. This consent must be given after the researcher has explained the following, whether in person or using a written information sheet:

- the nature and purpose of the research;
- the use to which it will be put;
- the proposed data collection method.

An ethical dilemma can arise where there are good reasons for *not* having the consent of participants. In principle, covert observation, for example, raises ethical problems. (Would you like to know that people are studying your behaviour without your consent or knowledge?) However, a blanket judgement cannot be made against this technique as the ethical considerations vary with each scenario. For example, suppose you were doing a study on pollution and you wanted to focus on the habits of the public in littering. You might want to station yourself in an area where there are litter bins to see if people really do use them and what they do with their trash. You could justify this technique by convincing others that there was a possibility that a questionnaire or interview might not yield truthful data in this instance.

The principle of consent does not only affect qualitative research. Survey data in sensitive situations may also require consent, and it will certainly require you to disguise the identity of respondents (see §20.3).

20.3

Privacy and confidentiality

As well as consent, the privacy of respondents and the preservation of confidentiality are essential.

- **Privacy.** Use pseudonyms or otherwise disguising respondents' identity. They may also wish to keep secret their involvement in your research, particularly if that research impacts on colleagues or relatives.
- **Confidentiality** involves keeping completely private any information or opinions which respondents have given during the course of data collection.

These are general principles. However, certain types of research, particularly in the qualitative paradigm, may cause other ethical dilemmas relating to privacy and confidentiality. Some of these are related to the concerns over consent which we looked at in the previous section.

20.3.1 Privacy

Thorny ethical issues arise from the decision to observe persons for research purposes without their prior permission. It is possible to argue that certain 'public' behaviours can be observed without permission because they do not threaten the subject in any way – for example:

- students' interactions with their teacher;
- behaviour of family members towards each other when taking part in leisure activities at a park or on a picnic;
- the behaviour of men eating alone in public compared to that of women;
- how children at a playground settle disputes and apportion leadership roles.

In these cases the argument is that if the subjects are aware of your scrutiny they will be self-conscious and subtly or otherwise change their behaviours. In this case the data would be flawed. However, in qualitative research this is seldom a problem because the researcher must get close to the subjects, befriend them and become a fixture in their lives for some period. Many ethnographic studies are based on a combination of interviews and prolonged observations with informed consent. In these cases the 'taking of notes' just becomes part of the mannerisms of the researcher and fades into the background. There will be initial curiosity but once members realise that the presence of the researcher poses no threat to themselves he or she is tolerated. Ensuring confidentiality (§20.3.2) gives respondents confidence that they will not be compromised by the researcher's questions. Of course, this limits the type of interactions and behaviours which the researcher can study.

However, there are observations which can be considered to be an invasion of privacy, such as observing those who are disabled or otherwise challenged in everyday life. Some of these practices might also leave you open to criminal prosecution, or at least accusations of wrongdoing. Consider these examples.

- Following someone around without their permission, even for the purposes of observation, with no interaction between you and the subject, could be seen as stalking, which in some countries is a criminal offence.
- Observing persons engaged in illicit or illegal acts might lay you open to charges of prospective

blackmail, since your information could lead to their prosecution or to a scandal.

Research, especially quantitative research, insists on anonymity so as to protect the privacy of respondents. Most people will be more ready to answer a questionnaire which is anonymous than one where they are clearly identified. Questions on certain matters should be avoided to protect the person's privacy, such as those relating to salaries and income – unless that is a specific research issue.

20.3.2 Confidentiality

It is essential that all opinions and information given by participants are kept confidential, in other words the researcher is bound by the rules of trust not to disclose this information as it relates to specific participants. This applies to a questionnaire using a large sample for quantitative research just as much as it does to a focus group interviewer dealing with a small sample in much greater depth. Confidentiality means that the researcher should not share with any other respondents the information given to them, except where the identity of the informant is fully protected so that it would be impossible for colleagues to guess who gave the information. As well as helping you to keep a professional attitude to research, confidentiality is a useful practice to adopt in personal situations, as it gives you the opportunity to understand other people's experiences better. Even your friends will share their opinions and experiences with you more readily if they feel that what they say will be kept confidential.

Issues of confidentiality are closely related to that of privacy. One way of ensuring confidentiality is to assure respondents that data collection measures will be anonymous and therefore they will know from beforehand that their identities will be protected. Anonymity, then, is the medium through which researchers attempt to ensure high levels of privacy and confidentiality. However, there are certain instances when a researcher may feel the need to break an informer's trust. These must pertain to very serious issues having to do with criminal activity and threats to the community.

ACTIVITY 20.1

Consider your own research.

1. What scenarios might call on you to breach the canons of confidentiality normally observed by researchers?
2. What are the risks involved in such an action?

20.4

Integrity and transparency of the research process

Apart from the questions of consent, privacy and confidentiality which we have already considered, the major ethical issues in the conduct of both qualitative and quantitative research are:

- to strive to avoid falsification of data;
- to watch for and exclude bias;
- to create transparency;
- to maintain an overall integrity for your work.

20.4.1 Avoidance of Bias and Inaccuracies

Whether you are collecting data from print or digital sources, from surveys or from interviews, there is always a danger of misinterpreting information. Sometimes this is caused by lack of clarity in the responses of the person who took part in your survey – and this can usually be improved by redrafting your questionnaire. Sometimes, however, it is caused by *bias*, which may be deliberate or unintentional – in the case of survey or interview respondents it is almost always unconscious, as most people do not want to appear biased or prejudiced. To some degree, everyone's thought processes are affected by bias and biased responses *may* form part of the data, particularly in a qualitative study. It is however important: (a) to be aware of your own prejudices and strive to be objective rather than being influenced too much by them; and (b) to recognise bias in the research data you are using.

◆ **Make a list of the types of bias which might be found in the course of research. How would you correct for this in writing up your findings? What types of bias might form part of the research data?**

The problem of inaccuracy can be different in the two main types of research, and the solutions to the problem are different as well. For example, in qualitative research:

- The chosen sample should involve respondents who know something about the topic under study so that the research reports findings based on relevant data.
- Data collection should be as comprehensive as possible. This means that researchers should continue to observe or interview respondents as long as they can in order to ensure that what they eventually report is an accurate portrayal of the situation they

are researching. Respondents may be shown the final draft for comment before publication.

- A number of different methods should be used to **triangulate** the data.

Triangulation involves the use of two or three different forms of data collection in order to increase the trustworthiness of the study.

- In data analysis, transcripts should be made from interview tapes and these should be re-read many times so that the researcher becomes immersed in the data. This in itself will help the researcher to arrive at insightful findings based accurately on the data.
- All procedures and interactions should be continuously documented, giving an **audit trail** of the researcher's

An **audit trail** is a record, whether on paper or in a computer file, showing all procedures followed by the researcher in the course of the study.

activities in case of future questions. The researcher's journal should record all ideas, false leads and lines of analysis pursued even if some of these are eventually abandoned. The journal would also document the justification for discontinuing a certain line of analysis and adopting another. This increases the trustworthiness and transparency of the study.

For quantitative studies, the issues are the same but are approached differently.

- Use of a large sample helps the researcher to be fairly confident that it is representative.
- A large sample also reduces bias on the part of respondents.
- Generalisations should only be made based on a truly representative sample.
- Care is taken in designing the instruments of data collection to increase accuracy, e.g. instruments should be pilot tested to increase reliability and validity.
- Correct statistical procedures and adjustments are used when analysing the data (Box 19.1).
- Statistical and other analytical procedures which have been used are detailed in the report so that others can, if they wish, **replicate** the study.

Replication involves using the same procedures, and should come up with the same quantitative results.

- Researchers should maintain some distance from participants so as to be as objective as possible.
- Whether using a questionnaire or interview, the questions must be the same for every participant and

be posed in the same order. Preferably, the instrument should be administered at the same time of day (morning or evening) every time it is used.

20.4.2 Transparency

Research should be carried out in an open and honest manner. In social science and humanities research we use two terms for this, **integrity** and **transparency**.

Integrity refers to a moral position, and implies honesty and a correct, upright attitude towards the work which is being done.

Transparency involves openness and an avoidance of cover-ups, secrecy and falsity.

Here are some examples of transparency in research:

- Researchers must be open about what their purpose is in carrying out a survey or interview.
- Their published findings must also be truthful and any falsification of data avoided.

- Research reports should be accompanied by an audit trail and the raw data should be kept safely and produced if there are any queries
- If other scholars' work has been used as a secondary source, this should be acknowledged (see §20.5 below).

20.4.3 Unethical Practices

Unfortunately, even in government-sponsored research, unethical practices on the part of researchers can prevent a study from having integrity and transparency. An example is contained in a paper published in 2009 which reported on the rapid spread of HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa (15 countries with an estimated 5 to 26 per cent of adults aged 15–49 years infected) and laid the blame for much of this on unethical practices in research and health care safety. An excerpt from this paper is included in Activity 20.2. This is an example of secondary research which involves the collation and analysis of existing primary research. In the article the author goes on to describe other incidents of unethical research practices in the study of HIV and AIDS.

ACTIVITY 20.2

Document Study: Masaka, Uganda: Untreated HIV

Please read the excerpt and answer the questions below.

In 1989, researchers funded by the government of the United Kingdom (UK) and working with Uganda's Medical Research Council began a series of repeated annual surveys in 15 villages in Masaka District. During each wave, researchers asked questions and drew blood to test for markers of HIV. The study team did not tell participants the results of these tests, but encouraged them to go for additional tests and counselling to learn their HIV status. As late as 2004, only 10% knew their HIV status.

From 1990, the Masaka study team invited adults identified as HIV-positive during annual surveys, along with HIV-negative controls, to visit a study clinic every three months for a physical exam and to answer questions. They did not tell the participants their HIV status and neither did they inform the clinic staff.

Masaka researchers used the cohort to study 'survival times, disease progression, and AIDS-defining disorders' in untreated Africans. In clinic visits, staff provided participants 'prompt treatment of conditions diagnosed using basic laboratory facilities and standard drugs from the WHO essential drug list, which should be available in any health post throughout Africa', but 'no prophylactic regimes or antiretroviral drugs were used'. In 2002, the Masaka team reported that median survival with AIDS among the participants was 9.2 months, 'similar to the average of 10 months reported in industrialized countries early in the HIV epidemic. However, the course of AIDS in developed countries has changed ... through the use of prophylaxis and antiretroviral drugs. Survival after an AIDS diagnosis in the United Kingdom increased ... to over 19 months in 1991'. Since 2004, primary prophylactic therapy and antiretroviral regimens have been available for HIV positive participants.

Source: Gisselquist, D. (2009). Double standards in research ethics, health-care safety, and scientific rigour allowed Africa's HIV/AIDS epidemic disasters. *International Journal of STD and AIDS*, 20(12), 839–845. At <http://std.sagepub.com/content/20/12/839.full>

Questions

1. List the unethical dimensions of the study undertaken in the excerpt. Consider at least FOUR different issues in your response.
2. Would such a study be allowed in the developed world? Explain your answer.
3. How can scientists study the progress of a disease in a person or an infected group without violating ethical principles?

When writing up your findings, it is very important to avoid **plagiarism**. This might occur even in a simple class

Plagiarism is the copying of other writers' work when preparing a piece of text.

research activity where a student surfs the Internet to find information. The information itself may be freely available, but if you copy it word for word, that constitutes plagiarism. You should always rewrite the information using your own words and as far as possible cite the source. The theft of original ideas violates the laws protecting intellectual property, known as copyright laws.

In social science and humanities studies, where a researcher is building, or relying in some other way, on an existing study, it is essential to acknowledge the fact and give credit to the original researchers for their work. A distinction should be made, however, between an *acknowledged quotation* (using quotation marks and an accurate reproduction of the original wording), or mention made of an *acknowledged study* (where the source is clearly given in brackets even though you have not quoted directly), and plagiarism, which makes no acknowledgement and effectively passes off someone else's work as your own.

The term *plagiarism* can be extended to the use of ideas and arguments, even where the direct wording is not used, but not if the source of the idea is given, or if the idea is sufficiently well known to have become part of mainstream thought. Thus there are 'grey areas' where plagiarism may or may not have occurred, and if you are in any doubt you should consult with your teacher or a librarian.



Wrap Up

In this chapter we examined ethical issues that may arise in research. We learned that in investigating human subjects we need to treat them with the respect and sensitivity due to them because they are fellow human beings. However, for all aspects of the research process, the researcher needs to be mindful that procedures and decisions must be systematic and transparent. The ultimate aim of adopting an ethical stance in research is to be assured that the findings have integrity and can contribute to increasing knowledge and understanding of the issue under investigation.

Practice Tests

Structured response questions

- 1 (a) Define the terms *audit trail* and *triangulation*. (2 marks)
 (b) Give ONE example of each. (2 marks)
 (c) Explain ONE way in which triangulation can be used when writing a survey report. (2 marks)
- 2 (a) Distinguish between privacy and confidentiality. (2 marks)
 (b) Give TWO ways in which privacy may be maintained in a qualitative study. (4 marks)
- 3 (a) Define the terms *integrity* and *transparency*. (2 marks)
 (b) Explain how the two concepts are linked in social science research. (2 marks)
 (c) Give ONE example of transparency in a named study. (2 marks)
- 4 (a) What is meant by a 'minor' in social science research? (2 marks)
 (b) Describe TWO special requirements which researchers must meet when a minor is involved as a research respondent. (4 marks)
- 5 (a) Explain what is meant by plagiarism. (2 marks)
 (b) Outline TWO methods a researcher might use to avoid plagiarism in the final study report. (4 marks)
- 6 (a) Identify TWO ways in which bias can affect the validity of a qualitative study. (4 marks)
 (b) State ONE method a researcher can use to reduce bias. (2 marks)
- 7 (a) Explain the principle of informed consent. (2 marks)
 (b) Outline TWO difficulties which a researcher may encounter achieving the correct level of consent when undertaking a study involving disabled persons. (4 marks)

Multiple Choice Questions

Module 1 Caribbean Society and Culture

1. Which of the following best defines a diasporic community?
 - (a) The scattering of the Jews to countries outside of Palestine.
 - (b) A large group of people with similar heritage who live in places beyond their ancestral homeland.
 - (c) The forced migration of Africans from their ancestral homeland to the New World.
 - (d) A social group forming a distinct cultural community who live within a society where there are other groups who practice different customs and have different beliefs and norms.
2. Identify the TWO Caribbean countries which have a coastline on the Caribbean Sea.
 - (a) Guyana and Belize
 - (b) Puerto Rico and Barbados
 - (c) Barbados and Guyana
 - (d) Puerto Rico and Belize
3. "The Caribbean refers to those countries washed by the Caribbean Sea" This definition can best be described as
 - (a) geographical
 - (b) diasporic
 - (c) geological
 - (d) historical
4. Identify the Caribbean country which is a republic.
 - (a) Dominica
 - (b) Barbados
 - (c) Montserrat
 - (d) Grenada
5. Which lines of longitude would BEST locate the Caribbean Region on a map?
 - (a) 60°E to 90°W
 - (b) 90°E to 60°W
 - (c) 60°W to 90°W
 - (d) 60°E to 90°E
6. Latin America and the Caribbean share common historical and cultural experiences EXCEPT for
 - (I) European colonization
 - (II) African slavery
 - (III) East Indian Indentureship
 - (a) I
 - (b) I and II
 - (c) II and III
 - (d) III
7. The socialist principles of co-operativism are enshrined in the constitution of which Caribbean country?
 - (a) Barbados
 - (b) Guyana
 - (c) Jamaica
 - (d) Bahamas
8. Which of the following is an independent Caribbean country?
 - (a) Suriname
 - (b) Martinique
 - (c) Turks & Caicos
 - (d) Montserrat
9. Which of the following definitions BEST explains cultural assimilation.
 - (a) when groups come into continuous contact with those of a different culture bringing about changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups
 - (b) socialization into and maintenance of the norms of one's indigenous culture
 - (c) the incorporation of a group of people or migrants into the dominant culture of the metropolitan or host country
 - (d) when a culture is transformed by adding new elements and the loss of existing ones
10. Which of the following factors are important in explaining the barriers to developing a shared sense of unity among Caribbean people.
 - (I) Location in an archipelago
 - (II) Speaking different European and Creole languages
 - (III) Colonial policies which divided different groups
 - (IV) Inter-territorial rivalries
 - (a) I and II
 - (b) I, II and III
 - (c) II, III and IV
 - (d) I, II, III and IV
11. What is meant by the charge that Caribbean history has had an ethnocentric bias?
 - (a) The historical account is written from the understanding that events occur within a particular cultural context.
 - (b) There is an emphasis on national sentiments in writing Caribbean history
 - (c) Caribbean history was written by Europeans who judged people and events from their own point of view
 - (d) There are inconsistencies or outright fallacies in Caribbean history and historians seek to correct or revise the account
12. The earliest migrations into the Caribbean region came from
 - (a) Europe at the time of Contact
 - (b) The Orinoco Valley northwards to the Caribbean Basin
 - (c) Early peoples crossing the Bering Strait
 - (d) African trading voyages in the 13th century

24. Which of the following is not a system of production?
- (a) the fallow system
 - (b) the encomienda
 - (c) plantations
 - (d) subsistence agriculture

25. All of the following statements explain slavery as a total institution EXCEPT
- There was rigid social stratification.
 - A system based on communal values and shared tasks.
 - A system where all aspects of life were confined to one place.
 - Social, political and economic life was determined by the plantation.
26. Identify ONE difference between African slavery and East Indian indentureship in the Caribbean?
- Africans were not regarded as chattel.
 - Africans could move between plantations.
 - East Indians could move between plantations.
 - East Indians were not regarded as chattel.
27. Identify ONE way in which African slavery and East Indian indentureship affected sugar production in the Caribbean.
- increased trade between Africa, India and the Caribbean
 - increased sugar production with increased mechanization
 - a dependency on cheap labour
 - it led to highly competitive prices on the world market
28. When the 'plantation system' is referred to as a metaphor for today's economy it means that
- labour today is highly unionized on the sugar plantations
 - there is still dependence on only one main product
 - foreign companies continue to dominate in sugar production
 - economic diversification has taken place
29. Maroonage refers to
- pillage and looting during slave rebellions
 - short absences from the plantation
 - the destruction of tools and property owned by the slave master
 - enslaved persons running away and forming free villages
30. All of the following are acts of resistance by Caribbean people EXCEPT
- websites by Amerindian groups seeking to maintain contact with each other
 - writing history texts chronicling the exploits of the Tainos and Caribs
 - celebrating the discovery of the New World by the Spanish
 - critiquing ethnocentric accounts of the Contact

Module 2 Issues in Caribbean Development

- What does 'neocolonial' mean?
 - new types of colonial patterns
 - worldwide trends in colonial relationships
 - similar colonial type arrangements today
 - groups today who want to re-instate colonial government
- Which of the following BEST explains development as the enactment of human values?
 - improvement in society must be related to emphasis on certain values
 - a belief in the value of economic progress and material possessions
 - increasing the standard of living in a country
 - development efforts should value what is best for most of the people
- Identify the difference between a developed and a developing country.
 - A developed country is characterized by extensive labour production.
 - A developing country has deeper linkages between different sectors of the economy.
 - A developed country has more of its workers in primary industries than in secondary and tertiary.
 - A developing country has a relatively high agrarian labour force.
- Development as human freedom can BEST be summarized as
 - development must include growth in personal autonomy
 - democracy ensures human freedom and therefore development
 - freedom from all needs and wants associated with one's welfare
 - development that assures economic progress
- The countries of the South typically include
 - Australia and New Zealand
 - developing countries
 - industrialized societies such as Brazil and China
 - more developed countries (MDCs)
- A traditional idea of development is one which seeks to
 - make people the centre of any development strategy
 - encourage the growth of human freedom and liberty in the society
 - increase population growth especially in developed countries
 - increase output and the per capita share of that output

7. Which of the following BEST explains the fact that whilst production has increased in Caribbean countries, poverty is still widespread.
 - (a) Foreign direct investment has decreased.
 - (b) The labour force is shrinking through migration and birth control measures.
 - (c) The economic elites continue to control opportunity.
 - (d) Goods, services and amenities are not widely available.
8. Which of the following BEST describes what is meant by sustainable development.
 - (a) Sustained economic exploitation of land and resources to facilitate economic progress and human welfare.
 - (b) Sustainable practices that are employed in agriculture, forestry, and watershed management.
 - (c) Economic development that will continue to benefit later generations, rather than short-term exploitation for short-term gains.
 - (d) Economic development based on principles of capitalist development.
9. All of the following are causes of soil erosion in Caribbean countries EXCEPT
 - (a) contour ploughing
 - (b) deforestation
 - (c) overgrazing
 - (d) monoculture
10. Which of the following countries has the lowest percentage of forest cover?
 - (a) Suriname
 - (b) Haiti
 - (c) Trinidad & Tobago
 - (d) Jamaica
11. Identify the theory of development which saw people as needing to be upgraded and improved so that they could bring about development.
 - (a) Human Capital Theory
 - (b) Modernization Theory
 - (c) Human Development Theory
 - (d) Dependency Theory
12. Identify the pillars of human development in the list below.
 - (I) equity
 - (II) productivity
 - (III) empowerment
 - (IV) sustainability
 - (a) I and II
 - (b) I, II and III
 - (c) 1, III and IV
 - (d) I, II, III and IV
13. The total market value of the output (goods and services) of a country in a given year is known as the
 - (a) Gross National Product (GNP)
 - (b) Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
 - (c) Gross National Income (GNI)
 - (d) Gini Index
14. The Human Development Index is a composite measure which includes all the dimensions below EXCEPT
 - (a) knowledge
 - (b) longevity
 - (c) Gini Index
 - (d) GDP per capita
15. All of the following are Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations EXCEPT
 - (a) achieve universal primary education
 - (b) reduce child mortality
 - (c) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
 - (d) improve per capita income
16. An important tool in comparing levels of inequality between countries and within a country is the
 - (a) Gini Index
 - (b) Purchasing Power Parity Index (PPI)
 - (c) GDP per capita
 - (d) GNP per capita
17. The Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) of the World Bank assesses good governance in a country by examining
 - (a) the unemployment rate
 - (b) efficiency in the education system
 - (c) control of corruption
 - (d) the health system
18. Childhood malnutrition is seen as a good indicator of poverty because
 - (a) the fast food culture has increased the incidence of juvenile diabetes
 - (b) it indicates that a country does not have the resources to address child health
 - (c) civil wars and famines tend to result in food insecurity
 - (d) children are affected more than others by food crises
19. That the value of domestic work and child/elder care is undervalued in the society can be seen as an example of
 - (a) gender stereotypes
 - (b) patriarchy
 - (c) matriarchy
 - (d) gender ideology

20. One of the main predictors of female poverty is
 (a) having a chronic ailment
 (b) living in a rural area
 (c) being young
 (d) single motherhood
21. An argument made by Marxist feminists is that
 (a) legislation should be changed to ensure equal rights for women
 (b) opportunities should be equalized for both genders
 (c) more attention should be paid to the ethnic stratification of women
 (d) women should be paid for work in the domestic sphere
22. Capitalism is a political and economic ideology that emphasizes all of the following EXCEPT
 (a) market-led development
 (b) minimum of restrictions by the state
 (c) poverty reduction
 (d) free enterprise
23. Which of the following Caribbean leader adopted socialist reforms in his country?
 (a) Michael Manley
 (b) Eric Williams
 (c) Eric Gairy
 (d) Grantley Adams
24. Of the following countries, identify the one with the least inequality amongst income groups.
 (a) Belize
 (b) Suriname
 (c) Jamaica
 (d) Barbados
25. Which of the following BEST describes how an entrepreneurship culture can be boosted in the Caribbean?
 (a) an increase in foreign direct investment such as MNCs
 (b) subsidies to offset the costs of experimentation
 (c) an improvement in the work ethic of Caribbean people
 (d) better functioning telecommunications systems and other infrastructure
26. Which of the following countries is LEAST susceptible to a natural disaster such as volcanic eruptions?
 (a) Dominica
 (b) Jamaica
 (c) St Vincent
 (d) Montserrat
27. All of the following are predicted examples of climate change for the Caribbean region EXCEPT
 (a) a shorter wet season but more powerful hurricanes
 (b) rainier wet seasons in some years
 (c) a large diurnal range of temperature
 (d) drier dry seasons in some years
28. The policy of Education For All (EFA) adopted by Caribbean governments refers to
 (a) distance education for those in isolated communities
 (b) an inclusive programme for all students in schools
 (c) all citizens being included in an education programme
 (d) providing programmes for drop outs from the education system
29. The following Caribbean countries are noted for specialized tourism products EXCEPT for
 (a) Eco-tourism – Dominica
 (b) Health tourism (spas) – St Lucia
 (c) Sports tourism – Antigua & Barbuda
 (d) Adventure tourism – Barbados
30. Agenda 21 refers to
 (a) a set of principles to ensure sustainable development
 (b) a UN Declaration on pro-poor policies
 (c) legislation to improve development in Third World countries
 (d) standards for the tourism industry

(Module 1)

1. b
2. d
3. a
4. a
5. c
6. d
7. b
8. a
9. c
10. d
11. c
12. b
13. c
14. c
15. a
16. d
17. b
18. a
19. d
20. d
21. c
22. b
23. a
24. a
25. b
26. d
27. c
28. b
29. d
30. c

(Module 2)

1. c
2. a
3. d
4. a
5. b
6. d
7. c
8. c
9. a
10. b
11. a
12. d
13. b
14. c
15. d
16. a
17. c
18. b
19. b
20. d
21. d
22. c
23. a
24. d
25. b
26. b
27. c
28. c
29. d
30. a

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